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ABSTRACT

This research compendium summarizes and reviews the evaluations of 13 out-of-school time programs with positive outcomes for young people. The programs are (1) 4-H; (2) 21st Century Community Learning Centers; (3) The After-School Corporation; (4) Beacons; (5) BELL After School Instructional Curriculum; (6) Big Brothers Big Sisters of America; (7) Boys & Girls Club of America; (8) Cap City; (9) Juvenile Mentoring Program; (10) Los Angeles's Better Educated Students for Tomorrow; (11) Quantum Opportunities Program; (12) Sacramento START; and (13) Youth Education for Tomorrow. Each evaluation summary includes the following: the design of the evaluation; what entity or entities funded the evaluation; a look at the program site; an overview of the program's purpose and how it started; demographic information on the population served; data on program costs; cost/benefit data; levels of statistical significance of findings; descriptions of the basic elements or structure of the program; factors that most strongly contribute to the program's positive results; and contact information. (WFA)

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Finding Fortune in Thirteen Out-of-School Time Programs

A Compendium of Education Programs and Practices

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Our goal is to enable policymakers and their aides to be more effective in their professional duties and of greater service—to Congress, the Administration, state legislatures, governors and national organizations—in the development, enactment, and implementation of sound policies affecting our nation's young people. We believe that knowing more about youth issues—both intellectually and experientially—will help our participants formulate better policies and perform their jobs more effectively. AYPF does not lobby or take positions on pending legislation. Rather, we work to develop better communication, greater understanding and enhanced trust among these professionals, and to create a climate that will result in constructive action. Each year, AYPF conducts 40 to 45 learning events (forums, discussion groups and study tours) and develops policy reports disseminated nationally. For more information about these activities and other publications, visit our web site at **www.aypf.org**.

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A Compendium of Education Programs and Practices

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Acknowledgements

The American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF) is pleased to present, with the encouragement and support of the Charles S. Mott Foundation, this report on out-of-school time programming for young people. This is the fifth AYPF compendium in a series of volumes that identify and describe research-proven youth programs and practices.

AYPF acknowledges several people for assisting in the creation of this publication. This report was written by Ming Trammel. Among those kind enough to review portions of this report were: Cherron Barnwell, Bill Christeson, Virginia Ebbert, Gail Helen Kramer, Suzanne LeMenestral, Priscilla Little, Elizabeth Partoyan, Mark Ouelette, and Heather Weiss. Colleagues at the American Youth Policy Forum—Betsy Brand, Donna Walker James, John Joseph, Samuel Halperin, Glenda Partee and Tracy Schmidt—also reviewed, edited and provided helpful advice on the report. Jacqueline Helm formatted the report. The views reflected in this publication are those of AYPF alone.

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Introduction

Overview

Finding Fortune in Thirteen Out-of-School Time Programs builds on the American Youth Policy Forum's (AYPF) previous efforts to provide youth policymakers, educators, and practitioners easy-to-read, accessible, at-your-finger-tip guides to research-proven, effective practices affecting youth, and to disseminate these findings in useful compendia formats. Five of AYPF's compendia of evaluations of effective youth programs are entitled as follows: 1) *Some Things DO Make a Difference for Youth*, 2) *MORE Things That DO Make a Difference for Youth*, 3) *Raising Academic Achievement*, 4) *Raising Minority Academic Achievement*, and 5) *No More Islands: Family Involvement in 27 School and Youth Programs*. These compendia serve as useful references that provide succinct program information about youth populations, and evidence of effectiveness and contact information.

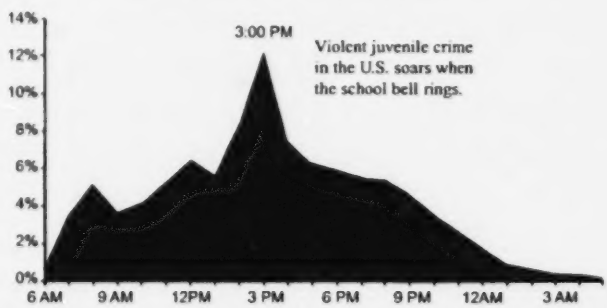
The present compendium, which summarizes the evaluations of 13 Out-of-School Time (OST) programs, represents AYPF's continued commitment to establish "what works" and identify "best practices" in programs that serve young people. OST refers to "programs, activities, and opportunities during non-school hours where staff are engaged in promoting the overall development of school-aged children and youth ages 6-18" (NIOST, 2003). The term OST represents a shift from "after-school," which often referred to programs that were narrowly focused on only providing academic assistance and a safe place for children in the non-school hours. However, the advent of the youth development movement forced programs to move beyond keeping youth safe and academically competent to providing youth with a sense of belonging, leadership skills, opportunities for input, and decision-making ability in programs, and challenging and interesting activities (Gambone & Arbreton, 1997). In short, OST programs, unlike after-school programs, involve efforts to comprehensively and holistically serve young people.

AYPF believes that it is critical to draw attention to OST programs for a number of reasons. First, youth participation in OST programs has been linked to increased academic, developmental, and social outcomes for young people. Next, youth who participate in OST programs have shown positive outcomes in school attachment, academic achievement, supportive relationships with adults, and peer relationships. Lastly, OST programs offer youth opportunities to engage in cultural activities, multiple intelligence learning environments (e.g., an OST program may use music to teach writing rather than solely using direct instruction), and increase their participation in artistic and recreational activities.

Research has shown that participation in creative and recreational activities can be associated with higher self-concept, self-esteem, and resiliency in youth. Due to decreased funding in the arts, music, and recreation, schools may no longer provide these activities. However, OST programs offer opportunities to compensate for this loss.

Further, the changing demographics of society from majority two-parent families to the increasing number of single-parent families highlights the importance of OST programs for providing safe, structured, and engaging activities for youth in the hours after school. The critical hours from 3:00 pm

Percent of Violent Juvenile Crime Occuring Each Hour on School Days



(Fox, Silverman, Newman, 2003)

to 6:00 pm, when most parents are working, are prime time for youth participation in criminal activity or as victims of violence. Therefore, participation in OST programs during this time may reduce the number of youth victims of crime and delinquency.

In reviewing the research literature on OST programs, AYPF found conflicting research linking youth outcomes to program participation. Some evaluations of OST programs have shown that youth who attend programs have higher academic grades, school engagement, and prosocial behavior than their peers that do not attend programs. Other research has shown no difference between students who attend programs and their peers who do not attend programs. Because research has demonstrated contrasting outcomes for young people, the ability to make the case that program participation is associated with positive youth outcomes is constrained (an expanded discussion on this subject will follow in the Key Issues in Research section of this report).

Only through continuous, high quality, and rigorous evaluations, and the establishment of best practices in the field will consistency of outcomes be established in the OST field.

The evaluations of the 13 OST programs that do show positive outcomes for young people, will:

- Contribute to a better understanding of how programs increase youth outcomes and identify key factors or components of effective programs;
- Provoke meaningful conversations on how to develop and sustain model programs; and
- Help policymakers, practitioners, and advocates systematically understand the overall picture of OST programming.

Thirteen may be an unlucky number, but we hope that these 13 programs will help policymakers, practitioners, and others "find fortune" in the academic and developmental outcomes in OST programs. This report includes four parts:

- An *introduction* to out-of-school time programming and to the findings of this report.
- A discussion of *key issues related to research on out-of-school time programs*.
- An *analysis* of the evaluations including outcomes, program components and contributing factors.
- *Recommendations* to the youth policy field regarding out-of-school time programming.

Key Issues in OST Research

This out-of-school time (OST) compendium summarizes and reviews the evaluations of 13 OST programs with positive outcomes for young people. A careful review of the evaluation summaries showed that many evaluations could have produced even more useful results if there was more focus in the following areas: (1) improvement in the reliability of research designs; (2) additional information on survey instruments; (3) examination of both academic and developmental outcomes; and (4) disaggregation of the research data.

One factor that makes research designs less reliable is selection bias. Since most program participation is voluntary, students who participate in programs are usually highly-motivated or have highly-motivated parents, so they may not represent the "average" student (Olsen, 2000). If selection bias occurs, drawing specific conclusions about the link between program interventions and positive youth outcomes becomes difficult. In other words, programs may show better outcomes for program students, but only when those students are compared to their non-program peers who are less motivated.

When research relies solely on data from students participating in the program, it may not be as reliable as other objective data that could be collected. The best way to control for selection bias and many other problems is through the use of adequate control groups. The use of control groups allows the differences between the program group and the control group (non-program students) to be attributable to the program intervention (Rossi & Freeman, 1993).

Another problem can arise if low numbers of program students participate in evaluations. If that happens, a complete picture cannot be drawn from program evaluations. There are a variety of different reasons that students do not participate in evaluations: (1) unsigned parental consent forms; (2) absence on days that evaluation occurs; and (3) incomplete student data in program files.

Research designs can be made more rigorous if:

- random assignment is implemented. Usually, program directors disagree with the technique of random assignment, because students who need services will not be able to participate in the program. However, non-program students could participate in the program at a later date.
- matched constructed controls are utilized. Students who receive the program intervention are matched with an equivalent group, not selected randomly, from whom the intervention is withheld.
- repeated-measures reflexive controls are employed. This allows for the same students to be observed repeatedly over time (Rossi & Freeman, 1993).
- evaluators communicate more clearly with program sites as to what information is needed to secure complete student program files.
- technical assistance is offered, by intermediary or funding agencies, to help programs better manage student files.

Gottfredson, Gottfredson and Weisman (2001) argue that weak research designs allow both advocates and critics of programs to use the same research to support their position on OST programs. For example, OST advocates use findings from the Quantum Opportunities Program (QOP) to show that positive youth outcomes can be linked to program participation (see evaluation summary for more information about QOP). Findings from the QOP research reveal that participants were more likely to be high school graduates, attend postsecondary schools, and less likely to be teen parents or to be arrested than their non-program peers. Despite the positive findings, opponents of OST funding point out shortcomings in the program's research design, such as the small evaluation sample and the select use of program sites included in the evaluation (Olsen, 2000). "For OST opponents, the glass containing evidence that program outcomes can be linked to participation is half-empty" (Gottfredson,

Gottfredson, &Weisman, 2001, p.81). Therefore, providing rigor to evaluation research is crucial in producing useful and credible results in OST research (Rossi & Freeman, 1993).

Another factor that would contribute to the continuous development of evaluation research is the provision of additional information on survey instruments as part of evaluation reports. Evaluations often use survey data to identify outcomes linked to program participation. However, reports often provide little information on the survey instruments themselves. Additional information might include copies of the survey instruments and, identification of the items within subscales and reliability scores. Further, information on the population on which the survey was normed should be provided.

Seligson cautions that program outcomes "should be broad so that one does not look only at test scores, but also the social and emotional development of the child (Hart, 2000)." She states, further, "in the current policy climate, we are assuming these programs can make a huge positive impact on children's achievement, and therefore narrowing the agenda to academic learning rather than care. OST programs are about both care and learning." In short, evaluations need to tell both sides of the developmental story of adolescents, by examining not only the effects of participation on academic outcomes but also on how programs may affect adolescents' resiliency, self-concept, school engagement and other vital areas of developmental opportunity.

Erikson's (1968) psychosocial developmental theory describes how an adolescent's search for identity can be manifested through participation in OST activities. When adolescents participate in OST activities, they have an opportunity to develop their sense of self. "Youth seek their true selves through peer groups, clubs, sports, religious, and other activities. These groups provide opportunities to try out new roles much in the way someone might try on jackets in a store until finding one that fits" (Miller, 1983, p. 166). A youth's full development into adulthood involves more than just what can be measured by academic outcomes alone.

The importance of the disaggregation of research data is another key issue, raised from the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) study findings reviewed in this report. Although there were no differences between program students and non-program students on academic outcomes, the disaggregation of the research data found that African American students showed increased effort in the classroom, reduced lateness for school, and increased math grades as a result of their program participation. Impacts on math grades and promptness were also evident for Latino students. None of these impacts were evident for white students.

There is growing evidence that OST programs have increased achievement gains for Latino and African American students. The LA's BEST (Better Educated Students for Tomorrow) program helped Latino students become more proficient in English than their peers who did not attend the OST program. In this same context, the Sacramento START (Students Today Achieving Results for Tomorrow) program showed greater gains for English Language Learner students compared to English speakers on math outcomes. Such findings from OST research suggest that programs may be beneficial in lowering the achievement gap for minority students. Therefore, more disaggregation of research data is needed.

By continuing to develop and improve evaluation research, the OST field may be more accurately tailored to student needs, which will result in services that improve students' lives, participation in school, and close the gap between minority students and their white peers. Improving the quality of evaluation research would help improve the quality of services for children and youth.

Report Methodology

This report is the sixth in a collection of American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF) compendia of evaluations of effective youth programs. The five other compendia are: *Some Things DO Make a Difference for Youth: A Compendium of Evaluations of Youth Programs and Practices* (1997); *MORE Things That DO Make a Difference for Youth* (1999); *Raising Academic Achievement* (2000); *Raising Minority Academic Achievement* (2001); and *No More Islands: Family Involvement in 27 School and Youth Programs* (2003). (The methodology used for these AYPF compendia is included as Appendix I.)

These compendia of evaluations of effective programs represent a broad range of youth-related initiatives, including early childhood through postsecondary education, English language development, career preparation, employment and training, service-learning, voluntary youth serving organizations, rehabilitation programs for youth offenders, and teenage pregnancy prevention programs. Programs were included in the earlier compendia because of their documented results for young people such as improved school attendance, classroom and home behavior; higher grade point averages; lower grade retention; lower demand for special education services; increased college attendance and lower participation in risk-taking activities and consequences (such as dropping out of school, alcohol use, pregnancy or court involvement).

AYPF set out to find evaluations of out-of-school time programming that met our basic criteria for inclusion in the AYPF compendia. These criteria included:

(1) ***program characteristics***—programs and practices had to target school-aged children and, ideally, adolescents;

(2) ***research quality***—evaluation sample, design, and methodology had to follow accepted research standards; and

(3) ***program results/outcomes***—the evaluations had to include quantitative data indicating the initiative resulted in positive effects on participants, such as improved academic achievement, increased graduation rates, decreased rate of risky behaviors, and others.

The search for evaluations included:

(1) summaries of updated and previous out-of-school time program evaluations published in prior AYPF compendia;

(2) reviews of national databases, such as the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), Sociological Abstracts, Harvard Family Research Program (HFRP), The After-School Corporation (TASC), Promising Practices Network (PPN), National Governors Association (NGA) and Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk (CRESPAR);

(3) internet searches; and

(4) direct contact with program coordinators, policymakers, funding officers and researchers, including staff of the Harvard Family Research Project and the Academy for Educational Development.

Six of the out-of-school time program evaluation summaries in this report were published in one of the other AYPF compendia: 4-H, Beacons, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, Quantum Opportunity Program, and Sacramento START. The other evaluation summaries are new: 21st Century Community Learning Centers, BELL After-School Instructional Curriculum, Cap City Kids Program, Juvenile Mentoring Program, LA's Best, The After-School Corporation (TASC) and Youth Education for Tomorrow (YET).

Each evaluation summary includes the following sections:

- *Overview* provides a brief look at how the program started and its purpose.
- *Population* offers demographic information on the population served.

- *Key Findings* summarizes the impact of the program on the target population. Data on program costs, cost/benefit data, and levels of statistical significance of findings are provided whenever available.
- *Program Components* describes the basic elements or structure of the program.
- *Contributing Factors* summarizes the factors that most strongly contributed to the program's positive results, either according to information directly supplied by the evaluators or our understanding of the evaluations, confirmed by the evaluators.
- *Study Methodology* briefly describes the design of the evaluation.
- *Evaluation Funding* indicates what entity or entities funded the evaluation. This provides the reader some understanding of the objectivity of the evaluator.
- *Geographic Areas* identifies the site of the programs evaluated.
- *Contact Information* is provided for both the evaluators and program implementers.

While the brevity of the summaries facilitates reading, it limits the information that can be provided. ***Readers are strongly encouraged to consult the original evaluations cited at the beginning of each summary and to contact the evaluator or program staff for more information, especially regarding study methodology.***

After summarizing the program evaluations, AYPF analyzed the results in three ways:

- What are common youth outcomes?
- What are common program components?
- Which contributing factors seemed to lead to positive outcomes?

Note: The evaluation summaries of the 4H and BB/BS programs are reprints of summaries that were published in previous compendia. As reprinted, the summaries did not indicate whether differences between program and non-program students or pre- and post measurements were statistically significant. However, evaluation summaries developed for the present compendium note whether differences between measurements or program and non-program student outcomes are statistically significant.

The Compendium Programs

- **4-H**—nationwide—is the largest voluntary co-educational program in the world. Evaluation focused on a special 4-H after-school program implemented in public housing in Kansas City, MO. The program was primarily for 5- to 11-year olds, with teenage public housing residents serving as mentors.
- **21st Century Community Learning Centers**—nationwide—In 1994, the 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) program was authorized by Congress to open schools for broader use by communities, including the creation of after-school programs. These programs include tutorial services, academic enrichment activities to help students meet local and state academic standards in reading and math, and youth development activities including: drug and violence prevention programs, technology education programs, music, and recreation.
- **Beacons**—San Francisco and New York—are community centers located in public school buildings that offer a range of services for participants of all ages, such as educational enrichment, after-school child-care, recreation, voter registration, cultural events, immigrant supports, health and mental health referrals, and substance abuse and pregnancy prevention. This study focuses on Beacon centers in New York City.
- **BELL After-School Instructional Curriculum**— Boston, New York and Washington, DC—In 1992, two members of the Harvard Black Law Student Association founded Building Educated Leaders for Life (BELL), a community-based, organization. The BASICs (BELL After-School Instructional Curriculum) program run by BELL meets for three hours after every school day, for thirty weeks, offering students concentrated small group tutoring and mentoring.
- **Big Brothers, Big Sisters (BB/BS)**—nationwide—is a 93-year-old program whose autonomously funded local affiliates support one-to-one mentoring matches between volunteer adults and young people.
- **Boys and Girls Clubs of America (B&GCA)**—nationwide—founded in 1906 and has more than 2,000 facilities in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands and U.S. military installations abroad. Nationally, more than 2,000 clubs serve over three million youth. In 1996, B&GCA piloted an after school educational enhancement program for youth in public housing in five cities. This evaluation looks at the results of the pilot study.
- **Cap City Kids Program (CCK)**—Columbus, OH—The Cap City Kids (CCK) after-school program was initiated by the Mayor's office, to improve youth educational outcomes and the access to positive youth development programs. It was piloted in four community recreation centers located in disadvantaged neighborhoods.
- **Juvenile Mentoring Program**—nationwide—The Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP) was implemented in 1995, by the U.S.Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to serve youth at-risk for delinquency, gang involvement, educational failure, and dropping out-of-school by beginning or continuing one-to-one mentoring relationships between adult volunteers and at-risk youth. To date, there are over 260 agencies in 48 states/U.S. territories that have received JUMP support.
- **LA's Best (Better Educated Students for Tomorrow)**—Los Angeles, CA—an after school program for students in grades K-5, including a safe environment, educational enrichment programs, and recreational activities primarily for minority students and youth from low-income families. Daily enrichment activities include homework assistance, computer activities, drama, sports, visual arts, reading, and field trips.
- **Quantum Opportunities Project (QOP)**—Philadelphia, PA; Saginaw, MI; Oklahoma City, OK; San Antonio, TX; and Milwaukee, WI—a year-round, multi-year, comprehensive service program for disadvantaged youth (families receiving food stamps and public assistance) launched in five communities in 1989. The QOP program provided each site of 25 youth with a caring adult that served as both role model and advisor to each student for four years.

- **Sacramento START**— Sacramento, CA— An after-school program providing a safe, educational learning environment for elementary school students from low-income families.
- **The After-School Corporation (TASC)**— New York—TASC's mission is to start or expand school-based after-school programs that are operated by non-profit or community-based organizations (CBO). Through several funders, TASC has funded more than 130 CBOs and other non-profit organizations in 143 New York City public schools and 75 schools in New York State.
- **Youth Education for Tomorrow (YET)**— Philadelphia, PA—established by Public/Private Ventures (PPV) to explore the capacity and potential of faith-based institutions in three areas: literacy, mentoring, and child-care services. This evaluation focuses on literacy. Sites were located in schools, community-based organizations, and several area churches and served young people who read three years or less below grade level.

Analysis

Following is a three-part analysis of the evaluations in this compendium focused on program components, outcomes and contributing factors.

Program Components

Each program evaluation summary in Section II briefly describes the key components of the program. This section of the analyses provides two tables that describe key program components and indicates which compendium programs use which program components.

Table I
Examples of Typical Out-of-School Time Program Components

Program Component	Examples
Academic Assistance	tutoring; homework assistance; small learning groups; reading groups; and writing projects
Cultural Enrichment	drama; visual arts and crafts projects; dance/movement instruction; creative writing; field trips to cultural performances; and exhibits
Drug & Alcohol Prevention	violence and drug prevention initiatives; and drug counseling
Life Skills & Training	conflict resolution training; health education; nutritional education; anger management; and peer discussion of important topics to youth
Mentoring	one-to-one mentoring
Parent & Community Involvement	parent support groups and counseling; adult education; free after-school child-care; parent-child computer classes; voter registration drives; community clean-ups; parenting classes; and workshops on naturalization and related legal issues
Sports & Recreation	organized team sports; fitness classes; martial arts; and free time for recreational play

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Table II
Program Components Used By Each Compendium Program

	Academic Assistance	Cultural Enrichment	Drug & Alcohol Prevention	Life Skills & Training	Parent & Community Involvement	Sports & Recreation	Mentoring
4-H	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
21st CCLC	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Beacons	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Bell	X	X		X	X		X
Big Brothers/ Big Sisters							X
Boys & Girls Clubs of America	X	X	X		X	X	
CAP City Kids	X	X	X		X	X	
JUMP	X						X
LA's Best	X	X		X	X	X	X
QOP	X	X		X	X		
Sacramento START	X	X		X	X	X	
TASC	X	X		X	X	X	X
YET	X						

Outcomes

Each program evaluation summary describes the key findings from the evaluations, with a focus on youth outcomes. This part of the analysis provides an overview of the types of outcomes achieved by youth participating in these 13 OST programs. The major program outcomes for young people are discussed below and include:

- **Academic Achievement**
- **School Attendance**
- **School Engagement and Academic Self-Concept**
- **Sense of Safety**
- **Social and Developmental**

This part of the analysis also includes information on the short-term and long-term outcomes that might be expected of OST programs.

Academic Achievement

Program evaluations examine youth academic achievement, using standardized tests, school grades, and other measures of academic success. Because of increased funding to OST programs along with the expectations of some that OST programs should improve academic outcomes, the viability of OST programs is often determined by evaluation findings that demonstrate gains in academic outcomes. Programs that do not demonstrate academic outcomes for young people may receive cuts in funding or may be viewed unfavorably; therefore, one of the most important program outcomes for young people is academic achievement.

In this compendium, 11 out of 13 evaluations identified academic achievement outcomes for young people. In most cases, students who attended OST programs were more likely than their non-program peers to have higher academic outcomes. For example, high school students who attended *QOP* were more likely to graduate from high school and to later attend college than comparable students who did not attend *QOP*.

The evaluation of the *TASC* program also found better academic outcomes for participants than non-participants. Evaluators report that on New York State Regents Math exams, *TASC* active participants (students who participated in more than 60% of after-school programming) were more likely to take and pass the Regents Math Sequential I exam by ninth grade than were non-participants (students who did not participate in the TASC after-school programs, but who attended school with TASC students); specifically, 32 percent of active ninth-grade participants passed the exam, compared to 1 percent of non-participant ninth graders. Further, TASC results showed that a higher proportion of active participants than non-participants took and passed the Regents English exam, by the end of eleventh grade (23 percent, compared to 9 percent).

CCK and *Sacramento START* represent city-wide initiatives to establish OST programs that would improve achievement outcomes or increase access to OST programs for young people. Youth, who attended *CCK*, increased their math achievement and homework completion grades (a specific category listed on student's reports cards where teachers rate students' performance on out-of-class assignments), at a higher rate than youth who did not attend *CCK*. Although the Sacramento *START* evaluation did not examine homework completion grades, the evaluation found that *START* students performed significantly better when post-tested on their math SAT 9 scores. Further, *START* students who were English Language Learners showed greater improvement on math achievement than their English-speaking peers.

The *START* finding that English language learners showed greater improvements than other *START* students was similar to the *21st CCLC* evaluation findings. While the *21st CCLC* evaluation found that program participants were just as likely to share similar learning outcomes as their non-participating peers, sub-group analysis for African American students found that students showed increased effort in

the classroom, reduced lateness for school, and increased math grades as a result of their program participation. Impacts on math grades and being on time to class were also evident for Latino students. None of these impacts were evident for white students.

Other programs showing improved outcomes for minority students were *LA's BEST* and *BELL*. *LA's BEST* helped Latino students became more proficient in English than their peers who did not attend the after-school program. Pre- and post- data for *BELL* students revealed that there were significant differences in reading and math scaled scores for student's over time. Further, 78% (n=208) of *BELL* students made grade-equivalent gains in reading and 79% (n=208) made grade-equivalent gains in math (n=208). On average *BELL* students began 5 months behind grade-level in reading and 3 months behind in math. By the end of the 30-week program, students were 1 month above grade-level in reading and 3 months above grade-level in math.

A unique faith-based program, *YET*, was specifically set up to improve the literacy skills of young people. The results of the *YET* evaluation showed that after students attended the program for 90 days, their reading ability improved by at least one-grade level.

Finally, evaluation results for nationally recognized programs, such as *BB/BS, 4-H*, and *BBCA*, show that students attending these programs improved their grade point averages or school grades.

School Attendance

An important factor in students' improved academic performance may be increased school attendance. Evaluations measure school attendance in a number of ways: (1) the number of days students attend classes; (2) the number of days students are absent from school; or (3) how many days students do not cut classes. Although program evaluations have shown that participation in programs can be associated with increased school attendance, few evaluations explain or speculate why an extra day in school may be important to young people's development. Does an extra one or two days in school for youth lead to improved outcomes? Further, how many more days in school are critical to improving outcomes? These questions need to be answered in order to gain a deeper understanding of the effects of increased school attendance on youth outcomes. In short, evaluations that simply report that youth attended one more day of school during the program intervention tell us very little about the relevance of increased school attendance for young people. Below are brief descriptions of programs that reported school attendance outcomes.

In this compendium, eight out of 13 programs, reported improved school attendance outcomes for youth. Programs like *BGCA, 4-H, START, CCK* showed that youth who attended OST programs missed fewer days of school. For example, students who attended *START* programs in the previous year improved their school attendance the following year from an average of 5.5 days absent to 5.4 days absent, a reduction of 0.1 days absent.

Other programs such as *Beacons* and *BB/BS* reported that students who attended their programs cut or skipped fewer classes.

TASC examined the attendance rates of low attendees (defined as students in the lowest attendance quartile) in the year before enrolling in *TASC*. It was found that their attendance rates improved in comparison to low attending non-participants. Fifty-one percent of the low-attending active participants improved their school attendance enough to move out of the lowest attendance quartile, while only 32 percent of non-participants improved their attendance to the same degree. Additionally, the *TASC* program reported the change in school attendance between middle school active participants and middle school non-participants during one school year program as 1.8 days.

Finally, the *LA's BEST* program evaluation speculated on the importance of program students' increased school attendance. According to the evaluators, one cause of the academic achievement for *LA's BEST* participants was increased school attendance. The evaluators charted average annual attendance rates for *LA's BEST* middle school students in 1994/95 and their peers in 1998/99. *LA's BEST* students

attended school three more days per year than the comparison group.

School Engagement and Academic Self-Concept
Finn and Voelkl (1993) define school engagement as an adolescent's regular participation in classroom and school activities and a young person's belief that school is an important aspect of their life. Three out of 13 evaluations found that youth increased their school engagement while participating in OST programs.

According to teachers, *LA's BEST* students were more engaged in learning than their peers who did not attend the program. Teachers of *4-H* students reported improvement of classroom behavior of elementary students. For teens involved in the *4-H* program, the mean suspension rate decreased from six days (1996) to zero days (1997).

A contributing factor to student's school engagement is their positive beliefs about their academic abilities. Mean pre- and post-test scores indicate that there were significant differences found for *BELL* students' self-perception of their math ability.

Sense of Safety
Although one of the primary foci of OST programs is to keep children safe after school, only three out of 13 evaluations addressed the issue of youth perception of safety after school.

An overwhelming majority of surveyed adolescents (86%) reported that they always or often felt safe in *Beacon* programs.

One of the *21st CCLC* program objectives was to make sure that children felt safe after school. However, non-program participants were slightly more likely to report that they felt safe after school (62.1%) than program participants (60.5%).

By providing a safe and fun-learning environment after school, the *START* program offered an alternative avenue of academic enrichment for minority and low-income students.

Social and Developmental
OST programs fill the critical hours after school for adolescents with structured activities and adult supervision. Adolescents that participate in structured activities spend less time watching television and more time in academic activities and enrichment lessons. In contrast, adolescents that spend time in unstructured activities, such as television watching or hanging out, are placed at risk for poorer social and developmental outcomes such as academic grades, work habits, and emotional adjustment (Posner & Vandell, 1994). Previous research studies have shown that participation in OST programs has lowered youth delinquency, teenage pregnancy rates, and other anti-social behaviors. (Center for Human Resources, 1995; Posner & Vandell, 1994; and Schinke, Orlandi & Cole, 1992).

Evaluations of several programs (five out of 13) found that program participation was critical to improved social and developmental outcomes. The *BB/BS* evaluation reported that participants were 46 percent less likely to initiate drug use (minority Little Brothers and minority Little Sisters were 70 percent less likely to initiate drug use); 27 percent less likely to initiate alcohol use (minority Little Sisters were 54 percent less likely to initiate alcohol use); and 32 percent less likely to hit someone.

Surveys of *Beacon* students showed that youth who participated at sites with higher youth development quality (i.e., the effective implementation of the principles of youth development) compared to *Beacon* sites that had general youth development quality (i.e., emphasis on keeping youth safe, well-organized activities, low staff-youth ratio) were significantly less likely to report that they had hit others to hurt them, deliberately damaged other people's property, stolen money or other property, and/or been in a fight.

Compared to control group students, *QOP* students became teen parents less often (24% vs. 38%) and they had a third less children. *QOP* students were also less likely to be arrested (19% vs. 23%) and they were involved in fewer total crimes. The control

group had 50 convictions for every 100 students, while the participants had only eight convictions for every 100 students, or one-sixth as many convictions.

Short-Term and Long-Term Outcomes

The attached table of "Aspects of Compendia Programs" provides some information on the types of short and long-term outcomes that might be expected from OST programs. Most of the evaluations in this volume only record a short-time period of program operation, and, while they report on some of the longer-term outcomes, these outcomes might have been greater had the evaluations covered a longer-time period of program operation.

Contributing Factors

Each program evaluation summary in Section II includes a section entitled "Contributing Factors," capturing what the program evaluator speculates may be responsible for the youth outcomes achieved by the programs. This part of the analysis describes the following factors that may have contributed to program success in out-of-school time programs:

- **Caring Relationships**
- **Community-School Partnerships**
- **Developmental Framework**
- **Family/Community Involvement**
- **Small Learning Communities**
- **Staff Quality/Development and Training**

Caring Relationships

Caring adult relationships are critical to the development of young people. Youth who are in supportive relationships with adults are provided with care, nurturance, and guidance. Further, caring relationships with adults provide youth with a mentor or role model that can recognize their personal strengths and talents and help youth increase these abilities and skills (AMHB, 2001).

Evaluations of seven out of 13 programs reported that providing youth with caring adult relationships was an important contributing factor to successful outcomes for young people. Programs like *BELL* ensure that staff commit to a one-academic-year relationship with students.

Other programs, such as *Big Brothers/Big Sisters* and *JUMP*, support one-to-one mentoring matches between volunteer adults and young people. The foundation of both programs is centered on adult volunteers providing consistent and caring relationships to young people that serve to prevent delinquent behavior and promote positive youth developmental outcomes.

> *"Participation in a [BB/BS] program reduced illegal drug activity and alcohol use, began to improve academic performance, behavior and attitudes, and improved peer and family relationships. Yet the [BB/BS] approach does not target those aspects of life, nor directly address them. It simply provides a caring, adult friend."*
> -Public/Private Ventures

Community-School Partnerships

There is a growing recognition that collaborative partnerships with schools and local city governments are essential to help OST programs raise academic achievement and to promote positive developmental outcomes for young people. Five out of the 13 programs had collaborative partnerships with local governments and schools.

LA's BEST began as an initiative from the Mayor's office to reduce gang-related activities in the city. The partnership between the city government and the schools has continued to be crucial to the success of the program. "The city has to be a player," says Carla Sanger, the CEO and President of the program, "we can't leave it to school districts alone. There are so many resources that a city can make accessible and affordable—theaters, parks, and field trips."

TASC established many new or enhanced partnerships that created more service venues and additional funding. An example of such partnerships included a relationship with the New York City Board of Education that helped to generate $8.5 million in expense reimbursements for TASC projects and the Madison Square Garden Foundation/Cheering for Children Foundation that gave students and their families greater exposure to New York's sports and cultural resources.

JUMP's infrastructure is maintained through an array of partnerships with local educational agencies (LEA), community-based organizations, schools, and project leaders.

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Developmental Framework

Many effective programs have moved away from a focus on eliminating youth deficits to one of supporting youth assets. In an effort to identify the elements of a strength-based approach to healthy development, the Search Institute developed the framework of developmental assets, which identifies 40 critical factors for young people's growth and development. Together, the assets offer a set of benchmarks for positive child and adolescent development (Scales & Leffert, 1999). Four out of 13 programs reported using an asset-based approach to engage young people.

The findings from the *BB/BS* evaluation speak to the effectiveness of an asset-based approach to youth policy that is very different from the problem-oriented approach prevalent in some youth programming. This developmental approach does not target specific problems, but rather interacts flexibly with youth in a supportive manner.

The *Beacons'* developmental approach views "youth as resources." In about three-quarters of the *Beacons*, youth are involved in organizing and implementing activities and events. Nearly 90% of the *Beacons* have a youth council, 86% involve youth as volunteers, and 76% engage youth as paid program and administrative staff. Lastly, close to 60% of *Beacons* involve youth in community service at least once a month.

Family/Community Involvement

Collaborative and participatory family or community involvement in youth programs can lead to improved youth outcomes. Evaluation of six out of the 13 programs reported that family or community members were involved with program activities.

Critical to the original vision of the *Beacons* was the creation of a safe place for parents and children to partake in an array of services and activities designed to strengthen both family and community life. Some of these activities include family and community holiday celebrations, events honoring cultural traditions, parent-support groups, and family counseling services.

Many parents used the *CCK* program as affordable childcare. Parents also served as volunteers and worked at *CCK* sites *CCK* reached out to families by providing referrals for social services, sending food home with children to share with their families, and having parents help plan summer program activities.

Sacramento *START* consciously worked to involve members of the community in its after-school program, hiring nearly three-quarters of its staff from neighborhoods surrounding the elementary schools where the program was held.

Small Learning Communities

Some programs used small learning communities to improve student outcomes. Small learning communities facilitate individualized instruction and greater personal contact with caring adults and their peers. Four out of 13 programs emphasized engaging students in small learning communities.

With no more than 20 students per staff member, *LA's BEST* provides for intimate learning opportunities in which staff members can give personalized instruction and attention to each child.

Because *QOP* project sites were small (25 students in each site), students were able to bond with each other and with adults in the program.

Staff Quality/Development and Training

All 13 programs recognized the need for a professional and well-planned approached to development and training for all staff. The following are program examples:

- The Youth Development Institute (YDI) offers a wide range of professional development opportunities for both *Beacon* directors and staff. These opportunities include monthly meetings of directors to help them incorporate a youth development perspective into organizational behavior and access to training where *Beacon* staff can learn the principles and practices of positive youth development.
- Staff members of the *BELL* program receive 16 hours of initial training to help them meet program objectives. Twenty-four hours of addi-

tional training throughout the duration of the program is also offered. Training topics include use of *BELL* curricula, instructional practices, and mentoring.

- Sacramento *START* staff is involved in a number of trainings related to program implementation process and principles. Core trainings are required for all site directors and program leaders and consist of workshops in classroom/behavior management, enrichment, homework/tutoring, literacy, attendance, and lesson plans. The *START* training program is a key strategy for aligning after-school program activities with the schools' curriculum.
- Most *TASC* site coordinators (91%) were college graduates and had at least three years of prior experience working in social services, youth services, community agencies or educational organizations. About half of all site coordinators had previously managed one of the above types of agencies. Further, about a quarter of after-school staff also worked in the host school as teachers, classroom aides or instructional assistants, or other staff. Most said that their dual roles benefited both the regular and after-school program.

Recommendations

The thorough analysis of the OST programs included in this report suggests a number of principles that OST programs should follow in order to achieve positive outcomes for young people. These principles parallel those in other AYPF compendia, as well as principles reflected in youth development research as a whole. Based on the findings on this report, OST programs should have:

- ***Caring and well-trained staff and volunteers.*** Caring adults relationships are critical to the development of young people. Programs should recruit well-qualified and caring staff and volunteers. Training should provide information on youth developmental outcomes, in addition to how to implement specific program components. Training should also be on-going, and include opportunities to evaluate staff performance. OST programs should carefully consider their goals and objectives and determine what the appropriate mix of certified classroom teachers, youth development professionals and volunteers might be, as each brings different skills to the OST program. In considering staffing issues, programs should keep in mind the need for consistency and dependability in the lives of children.
- ***Clear goals and objectives.*** To demonstrate effectiveness, OST programs need clear goals, defined objectives, and specified outcomes. This is important so that OST programs can be evaluated on the factors they are attempting to influence. For example, a program aimed at fostering teamwork through soccer should not be held accountable for increasing math scores. On the other hand, all programs should have ways of measuring a wide range of achievement objectives that may be indirectly influenced by the OST activities.
- ***Dependable and structured programming.*** The presence of structured programming appeared to be the main source of difference between youth in treatment and control groups, who, in many cases, both participated in some type of activity after school hours. The edge provided by formal OST programs was often relatively small, related to incremental increases in attendance or academic performance, and seemed in part attributable to the structure of the OST program as opposed to unstructured participation in random activities occurring after school.

  A consistent schedule of activities also has the potential of increasing the involvement of young people, particularly middle and high school-age youth who can "vote with their feet" and skip the OST program when teachers change or their activity of interest is not offered on a particular day. Programs can then adapt to provide the set of activities most attractive to participants.
- ***A focus on both academic and developmental outcomes.*** OST programs should not only provide academic assistance and keep children safe and out of trouble, but also provide engaging environments that motivate and inspire learning through developmentally appropriate cognitive, social, and physical activities.
- ***A focus on both short-term and long-term outcomes.*** Most programs developed a "logic model" approach that established the connections between existing problems or conditions that impact youth, program activities, and the intended outcome that these activities would have on young people. These models indicated both the expected short-term results of the OST program, such as increasing adult role models and structured activities for youth, and the longer-term outcomes such as increased school attendance, grades and improved developmental outcomes. Short-term outcomes properly sustained and directed should lead to the long-term outcomes sought.
- ***High quality and continuous evaluation.*** OST programs need to be evaluated to learn more about the factors that lead to positive youth outcomes, both directly and indirectly, as well as, short- and long-term. Rigorous evaluation methods should be used wherever possible including the use of matched control and comparison groups or pre- and post-tests.

Evaluation results should be used to continually adapt and improve program activities and processes. Both process and outcome evaluations are useful to the development of effective programs. Youth outcomes should be part of the evaluation information collected, but caution should be used in attributing a variety of youth outcomes to OST programs. Many other factors are related to both positive and negative outcomes for young people, most prominently the quality of each child's formal schooling experience and family situation.

- ***Inclusion of families in programs.*** OST programs can benefit from the inclusion of families in programs. Building communication and interactions with parents can increase student involvement. Parents can also be involved in planning various OST activities such as cultural and recreational activities. In addition, some OST activities can be directed at parents including English Language Development or home ownership classes held after school at the same location as the OST program for their children.
- ***A focus on youth development, including increasing youth leadership.*** The positive youth outcomes of OST programs were sometimes under-realized due to low participation by young people who did not attend on a daily basis. Middle and high school-aged youth are those most likely to have competing after-school options and the ability to decide how to spend their after-school time. For these young people, in particular, involving them in planning OST activities may be essential to holding their attention and increasing their participation and outcomes.

Evaluation Summaries

4-H: Kansas City, MO

A Summary of:

"4-H as an Urban Program"
(1998), Resource Development Institute

Program Activity

- ✓ Academic assistance
- ✓ Cultural enrichment
- ✓ Drug & alcohol prevention
- ✓ Life skills & training
- ✓ Mentoring
- ✓ Parent & community involvement
- ✓ Sports & recreation

Overview

The largest voluntary co-educational youth program in the world, 4-H is implemented in both rural and urban settings. The four H's stand for head, heart, hands, and health and reflect the program's pledge: "My head to clearer thinking; my heart to greater loyalty; my hands to larger services; and my health to better living." Since 1914, 4-H programs have been administered by Cooperative Extension offices formed by partnerships among federal, state, and county governments and other local public and private organizations. The Extension office must include a university, which is almost always the land-grant university. The program was initially developed to improve the living conditions of small farmers and their families through education and was focused on school-aged children. In the late 1970s, the concept was expanded and introduced in urban settings. The first after-school 4-H program in public housing started in Los Angeles. In 1995, with the support of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, this urban model was replicated in other cities. This report focuses on programs in Kansas City.

Population

In April 1996, 4-H opened three public housing developments in Kansas City, MO to serve 40 youth. Two other sites were opened the next year for a total enrollment of 145 youth and an average daily attendance of 120. There were six more girls than boys in the group. Ages vary from 5 to 11 years old, with the largest group between 5 and 7 years of age. Ninety-eight percent of the 145 youth were African Americans. Eighteen teenagers, also public housing residents, worked as mentors.

Key Findings

The program maintained a continuous evaluation system that focused on both process and outcomes for the child, the family and the community. A comparison of students' performance prior to and after participation in the program indicated that 4-H participation:

- increased school attendance (school attendance increased from an average of less than two days to more than four days per week for participants in elementary school)
- improved classroom behavior (teachers reported improved classroom behavior of elementary students; for teens involved in the program, the mean suspension rate decreased from six to zero)
- improved grade point average (teens' grade point averages increased as much as three grade points, and all students met appropriate grade level standards; grade improvement in elementary school children was directly related to intensity of participation in the program)

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- improved behavior at home (parents and community leaders reported that participants demonstrated improved relations with siblings and parents)
- reduced illegal activities in the community (at least six of the teens had been involved with the police before; after entering the program all 18 teens and the 145 elementary students had no reported participation in drug use or other illegal behaviors)

Program Components

All 4-H Programs emphasize a "hands on" approach and the connections between academic and work-related learning, with emphasis on life skills development and a strong community-centered focus. The programs also provide youth with opportunities to interact with adults and other successful teens beyond the school environment.

The Kansas City 4-H program is an after-school program that includes:

- educational enrichment (organized in small groups, participants work daily on a curriculum especially developed for 4-H, which focuses on reading, vocabulary, ethnic enrichment, science, math and entrepreneurial topics)
- employment of local residents as site director and mentors (each site director supervises up to seven teenage mentors; all staff must reside in the public housing where the program is located)
- on-going staff development (staff receive a minimum of 250 hours per year of training in curriculum development, personal development, conflict resolution, interpersonal relations, job skills and career development)
- customized curricula (character building and drug prevention strategies are integrated with academic curriculum and individualized to meet the needs of participant youth and families)
- nutritional education (participants learn about eating healthy food and a nutritional snack or meal is served each day; for some 4-H participants, this may be their only evening meal)
- mentoring (participants are asked to bring all homework to the site and are helped by teen mentors when needed; teen mentors are local residents selected for their success in school and their ethical and moral behavior; the average ratio is six participants per mentor)
- community activities (the 4-H concept is that the more a family is involved in the community, the healthier the behavior of its members; community activities are used as a venue for recognizing achievements in academics, sports, and ethical and moral behaviors)
- school connection (includes collaborative and coordinated program planning, ongoing school visitation to monitor attendance and academic growth, advocacy for children and youth)

Contributing Factors

Community Involvement

Site residents are actively involved in the programs and may serve in the local Resident Management Councils, a part of public housing management. They also serve on the Vision Team, the program's advisory board for operations and expansion. The Vision Team is composed of representatives of the founding Coalition, private industries, local, state and federal government agencies, and site residents, including teen mentors and project participants.

On-going Evaluation

A system of continuous evaluation and feedback is used to monitor the program and its outcomes while also providing information that is used by the site's Management Council and Vision Team to improve and modify the programs.

Holistic Approach

The 4-H concept focuses on the individual, the family and the community. The programs equally emphasize success in academics, sports, work, respect for others, and dedication to the community.

Contact with Caring Adults

Many of the participating children are latchkey children, who see the 4-H staff as a steady support and their main role models.

Study Methodology
Kansas City 4-H maintains a system of on-going evaluation that combines qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Evaluation includes process (achievement of goals and objectives) and outcomes. Data is used to improve the program. School attendance and grades are collected from the schools and 4-H attendance is monitored by the site directors. School-based behavioral data is collected from teachers using the Walker-McConnell Scale. Behavior in the family and community was measured by surveys with parents and community leaders.

Evaluation Funding
Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Geographic Areas
Kansas City, MO

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21st Century Community Learning Centers

A Summary of:

"When Schools Stay Open Late: The National Evaluation of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program" (2003) by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. & Decision Information Resources, Inc.

Program Activity

- ✓ Academic assistance
- ✓ Cultural enrichment
- ✓ Drug & alcohol prevention
- ✓ Life skills & training
  Mentoring
- ✓ Parent & community involvement
- ✓ Sports & recreation

Overview

In 1994, the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program was authorized by Congress to open up schools for broader use by communities. The 21st CCLC offered an opportunity for students and their families to continue to learn new skills and discover new abilities after school. In 1998, the program was refocused on supporting schools to provide school-based academic and recreational activities after school and during other times when schools were not in session, i.e., weekends and holidays. Programs were funded on a competitive basis through federal grants made directly to local educational agencies (LEAs). The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 changed the 21st Century program further by allotting funds directly to states to carry out their own grant competitions and awards and allowing education agencies as well as community and nonprofit organizations to run CLCs.

The evaluation acknowledged and measured three important goals of the 21st CCLC programs for the first three cohorts 1998-1999, 1999-2000, 2000-2001: academic achievement outcomes, developmental outcomes and creating safe places for children.

One of the most important components of the 21st CCLC's was the program's focus on academics. In 21st CCLC after-school programs, tutorial services and academic enrichment activities were offered to help students meet local and state academic standards in reading and math.

Population

Elementary School Study Population
There were 587 program students and 381 comparison students that participated in this study. Of the program students that participated in this study, 47% were males and 54% were females. Ten percent of the program students were white, 67% African American, 19% Latino, and 2% Other. Of the non-program students, 51% were males and 50% were females. Eight percent of the students were white, 73% African American, 14% Latino, and 2% Other.

Middle School Study Population
There were 1,752 program students and 2,437 comparison students that participated in this study. Of the program students that participated in this study, 47% were males and 53% were females. Thirty-eight percent of the program students were white, 28% African American, 12% Latino, 16% other and 6% were Mixed Race. Thirty percent of program participants earned grades of mostly A's; 36% of mostly B's, 23% of mostly C's, 9% of mostly D's or below, and 2% were not graded. Of the non-program students, 47% were males and 54% were females. Forty-one percent of the students were white, 25% African American, 12% Latino, 16% Other, and 7% Mixed race. Thirty-four percent of non-program students received grades of mostly A's, 36% mostly B's, 21% mostly C's, 8% mostly D's or below, and less than 1% were not graded.

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21st CCLC programs that participated in the evaluation were housed in elementary and middle schools (high school students were served by some of the programs but were not included in the evaluation). Most public school grantees that were part of the study had operated some type of after-school program before receiving a 21st Century grant and were using their grant funds to expand or modify their services and activities. Funding for the 21st CCLC grew from an appropriation of $40 million in fiscal year 1998 to $1 billion in fiscal year 2002. Financial support for 21st CCLC programs supports after-school programs in about 7,500 rural and inner-city public schools in more than 1,400 communities.

Key Findings

Elementary School Students

Learning Outcomes

21st CCLC program students had similar learning outcomes as non-program students on reading (82.6 vs. 81.7) and math grades (81.0 vs. 79.6) and reading test scores (34.3 vs. 34.1). However, program student's social studies grades did differ significantly from non-program peers (83.0 vs. 80.0).

Parental Involvement

Parents of elementary program students were more likely to help their child with homework or ask about things they were doing in class.

Sense of Safety

One of 21st CCLC program objectives was to make sure that children felt a sense of safety after school. Although the difference between the two groups was not significant, program students reported that they were less likely to feel safe after school than non-program students (74.3 vs. 75.5).

Anti-social Behavior

The number of suspensions, school absences, and teacher reports of discipline problems were similar for both 21st CCLC program students and non-program students.

Developmental Outcomes

21st CCLC program participants were no more likely than their counterparts to report getting along with others their age, feeling included, being good at working with others in a team, or setting a goal and working to achieve it.

Middle School Students

Learning Outcomes

Evaluators highlighted that improving learning outcomes is what distinguished 21st CCLC after-school programs and an overwhelming number of parents (i.e., 75%) believed that program participation would help improve their child's school grades. However, program participants were just as likely to share similar learning outcomes as their non-participating peers on their English, science, and social studies or history grades. Program participants were as likely to complete their homework as their non-participating peers, although they were more likely to do so to their teachers' satisfaction. Participants did have slightly higher math grades and school attendance.

A subgroup analysis found that more frequent attenders (4-5 days per week) did not have larger learning gains than less frequent attenders (2 days per week). A subgroup analysis comparing programs that put more or less emphasis on academic achievement also showed no differences in achievement gains.

Improved student outcomes for African Americans and Latinos

Sub-group analysis for African American students found that students showed increased effort in the classroom, reduced lateness for school and increased math grades as a result of their program participation. Impacts on math grades and being on time to class were evident for Latino students. None of these impacts were evident for white students.

Parental Involvement

Research on middle school students showed that parents increased their involvement at student's schools. Parents were more likely to volunteer at

their child's school and attend open houses or parent-teacher organization meetings.

Sense of Safety

One of the 21st CCLC program objectives was to make sure that children felt a sense of safety after school. However, non-program participants were slightly more likely to report that they felt safe after school (62.1%) than program participants (60.5%), although this result did not differ significantly between participants and nonparticipants.

Anti-social Behavior

Although rates were not high, program participants were more likely to participate in anti-social behavior than their non-program counterparts, i.e., selling drugs (3.3% vs. 1.8% at the .05 significance level) or smoking marijuana, and female program participants were more likely to have had their personal property damaged or to have been picked on after school. Other measures of behavior—such as receiving detention for misbehavior, being sent to the office, and teacher reports of discipline problems—were the same in both groups.

Developmental Outcomes

21st CCLC program students reported similar scores of being able to get along with others their age, feelings of being included, being good at working with others in a team, or setting a goal and working to achieve it. Middle school program participants were less likely than nonprogram participants to rate themselves as good or excellent at working out conflicts with others.

Program Components

Academic Assistance

Generally, students received 45 minutes to an hour of academic assistance as their first activity in program sites. This was also the most prevalent activity at sites. For many sites, this took the form of homework assistance. The homework sessions typically consisted of 20 students monitored by two staff members (usually certified teachers or a certified teacher and a paraprofessional). Despite the presence of teachers at host school homework sessions, site visitors rarely observed staff members checking homework for completeness and accuracy. Further, homework sessions were often noisy. A few centers did develop strategies to strengthen homework sessions, i.e., using journals to find out what students were supposed to be working on and sending notes to the regular teacher that the student had completed the assignment.

Recreation

Recreational activities include swimming, weight training, bowling and basketball, among others. This is the second most prevalent activity offered by after-school sites.

Cultural and Interpersonal Skills

Most centers (77%) offer cultural activities, such as foreign languages, arts and crafts, manners training, drama, music and interpersonal skills development (leadership, conflict-resolution, and positive peer modeling).

Other

In addition, 21st CCLC programs provide activities, such as drug and violence prevention programs, and technology education programs.

Contributing Factors

Low Levels of Student Participation

The average student attended the program less than two days a week, despite the fact that programs were open to participants four to five days a week.

Limited Efforts to Form Partnerships and Plan for Sustainability

While programs often worked with community organizations (89% of grantees in the study reported working with community organizations), the dominant type of collaboration was for centers to contract with community agencies to provide specific after

school instruction rather than as partners with shared governance or combined operations. Since many after-school sites were relying on funding from the 21st CCLC grant, it is very important for sites to identify additional sources of funding to maintain sustainability once 21st Century funds end. At the time of site visits, evaluators found that one-third of grantees had made no plans and taken no actions to sustain their programs; half had developed some plans but had not yet taken any action.

Staff Quality

A third of the program coordinators and three out of five program staff members are school-day teachers. To accommodate the varying schedules and requirements of teachers, staff members often worked only a few days a week and for short periods.

Professional Development

Many program directors and coordinators believe that training for staff was unnecessary because many staff members had teaching backgrounds and were sufficiently trained for performing their after-school roles. During the 2000-2001 school year, 75% of center coordinators and 25% of staff reported receiving training. There are two types of training available: (1) orientation (i.e., objectives, policy, and procedures of the program) and (2) skill training (i.e., taught staff how to perform tasks critical to their center roles).

Study Methodology

The evaluation's design includes both a middle and elementary school study. The elementary school study used random assignment of students to treatment and control groups and involved 14 school districts and 34 centers. Results presented here are from seven school districts selected in the first year of the study. These school district sites were selected because they were over-enrolled and had enough applicants to create control groups. While the measures had "internal validity," researchers cautioned that the sites are not representative of all 21st CCLC elementary schools in that the sites are more urban, serve a larger percentage of minority children and serve more disadvantaged children than other elementary school programs.

The middle school study is based on a nationally representative sample of after-school programs and participants and a matched group of students that is similar to the program participant group. Thirty-four districts and 62 centers in the districts are included in the middle school study. Regression analysis was used to adjust for baseline differences between program participants and similar students used for comparison with variables including demographics, socioeconomic status, test scores, attendance, disciplinary problems and self-reported grades.

Survey data was collected on family background, after-school activities, school experiences, in-school and out-of-school behavior, and experiences in and knowledge of after-school programs.

Evaluation Funding

The evaluation's primary funding was from the U.S. Department of Education, additional funding was also received from the C.S. Mott Foundation.

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The After-School Corporation

A Summary of:

"Patterns of Student-Level Change Linked to TASC Participation, Based on TASC Projects in Year 2" (2001), by Richard N. White, Elizabeth Reisner, Megan Welsh, & Christina Russell

Program Activity

- ✓ Academic assistance
- ✓ Cultural enrichment
- Drug & alcohol prevention
- ✓ Life skills & training
- ✓ Mentoring
- ✓ Parent & community involvement
- ✓ Sports & recreation

Overview

In an effort to increase the quality and availability of after-school programs in New York, the Open Society Institute (OSI) established The After-School Corporation (TASC). Since the 1998 inception of TASC, OSI has committed up to $25 million a year to after-school programming for a period of five years. This commitment was conditional on TASC obtaining matching funds from public and private sources on a 3:1 basis. Currently, OSI has extended funding to TASC for two additional years and possibly beyond. With funding from OSI and collaborative support from the New York City Board of Education and other sources, TASC's mission is to start or expand school-based after-school programs that are operated by non-profit or community-based organizations (CBOs). To date, TASC has funded more than 130 CBOs and other non-profit organizations in 143 New York City public schools and 75 schools in New York State for approximately 40,000 school children served by TASC.

Population

Students who attended TASC programs were typically considered at-risk for educational failure (i.e., 68% and 66% of active students scored below grade in level in reading and math, respectively prior to entering TASC programs). Demographic characteristics of TASC students included information on active participants (i.e., TASC students that attended at least 60% of the after-school program). In general, program participants were Latino (46%), African American (40%), Asian/Pacific Islander (9%), white (6%), English Language Learners (16%) and Recent Immigrants (8%). Forty-eight percent of active TASC students were male and 52% females. A significant proportion of active students (87%) were eligible for free lunch and 6% were eligible for reduced-price lunch. TASC programs were implemented in K-12th grades.

Key Findings

The TASC evaluation compared active participants (students who participated in more than 60% of after-school programming), non-active participants (students who participated in less than 60% of after-school programming) and non-participants (students who did not participate in the TASC after-school programs, but who attended school with TASC students) on the outcome factors of school attendance and scores on New York's Regent exams.

School Attendance

K-8 grade. For students in K-8 grade, active participants attended school more frequently (92.2% of school days) than non-participants (90.9%) in the

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year prior to their TASC participation. After participating one year in the TASC program, active participants' attendance increased to 93.2%, compared to no change in the initial rate for non-participants (90.9%). The change in school attendance between active participants and non-participants, during one school year program was 1.8 days.

10-12th grade. Active students in grades 10-12 attended school at a rate of 96% in the year before their TASC participation compared to non-participants at a rate of 93%. In a year after TASC participation, both active participants' and non-participants' attendance rates declined to 93.5% and 89.5%, respectively. There was a faster rate of decline for non-participants than active participants. The attendance rates for 9th graders were not included, because of inconsistent and missing data.

Low attendees. When examining the attendance rates of low attendees (defined as students in the lowest attendance quartile) in the year before enrolling in TASC, it was found that their attendance rates improved in comparison to low-attending non-participants. Fifty-one percent of the low-attending active participants improved their school attendance enough to move out of the lowest attendance quartile, while only 32% of non-participants improved their attendance to the same degree.

Regents math exams. Evaluators reported that active TASC participants were more likely to take and pass the Regents Math Sequential I exam by ninth grade than were non-participants (32% of active ninth-grade participants passed the exam, compared to 1% of ninth-grade non-participants). The Math Sequential I exam is usually administered to students who have taken Algebra I. As Algebra I is considered to be a gatekeeper course determining a student's eventual readiness for college, it is an especially important measure of achievement. In comparing active and non-participants, it was determined that active participants were more likely to advance to Math Sequential 2 and 3 exams (52% of active participants passed both the Math Sequential 2 and 3 exams, compared to 15% of non-participants in the same grades).

Regents English exams. A higher proportion of active participants than non-participants took and passed this exam by the end of eleventh grade (23%, compared to 9%).

Program Components

Academic and cognitive development activities
TASC sites provided students with homework help, organized writing and reading activities, and math and word games. Older TASC students engage in preparatory courses for the Regents and/or SAT exams and field trips to high school and college campuses.

Artistic development
Many opportunities are given to TASC students to experience the arts and develop artistic skills i.e., visual arts and crafts instruction/projects, dance/movement instruction, creative writing and field trips to performances and exhibits.

Development of health, well-being and life skills
TASC sites report offering the following activities in various degrees to promote the health and well-being of students: conflict resolution training, health education, instruction in life skills, and peer discussion of topics important to youth.

Sports and recreation
Most sites offer some form of recreation and sports activities i.e., organized team sports, fitness classes, martial arts and free time for recreational play.

Civic engagement and community service
TASC students learn to relate the world outside their school and families through participation in service projects, discussion of current events, and opportunities to engage in mock government/election activities.

Contributing Factors

Staff quality
Most site coordinators (91%) are college graduates and have at least three years of experience working in social services, youth services, community agencies or educational organizations. About half of all site coordinators have managed one of these types of agencies. Further, about a quarter of after-school staff also worked in the host school as teachers, classroom aides or instructional assistants, or other staff. Most said that their dual roles benefited both the regular and after-school program.

Collaborative partnerships
TASC established many new or enhanced partnerships that created more service venues and additional funding. An example of such a partnership included one with the New York City Board of Education, which generated $8.5 million in expense reimbursements for TASC projects and the Madison Square Garden Foundation/Cheering for Children Foundation which gave students and their families greater exposure to New York's sports and cultural resources.

Technical assistance
TASC provides a few small to mid-size CBO's with intensive technical assistance to increase their ability to operate high-quality after-school programs that would have a high likelihood of being sustained. There is a concern that small to mid-size CBOs might not be able to attract outside financial support to meet the required mandated funding match or be able to bring their programs to sufficient scale to support stable operations (proportional to their type and level of need).

Teach after Three
The Teach after Three program is designed to identify and recruit new teaching candidates from TASC after-school program sites. TASC, in joint partnership with the City University of New York, helped recruit several project staff into the New York City Teaching Fellows program. TASC also sought to develop an alternative training model that would place student teachers in after-school sites in high-need schools and districts.

Study Methodology
Evaluators compared active participants, non-active participants and non-participants on the outcome factors of school attendance and New York Regent exam scores. Pre/post outcome data was collected for students one year prior to participation in the TASC program (1998-1999) and one year after participation in the TASC program (1999-2000).

Evaluation Funding
C.S. Mott Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York and W.T. Grant Foundation.

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Beacons: New York City

A Summary of:

"Evaluation of the New York City Beacons" (2002) by Constancia Warren, Michelle Feist & Nancy Nevarez

Program Activity

- ✓ Academic assistance
- ✓ Cultural enrichment
- ✓ Drug & alcohol prevention
- ✓ Life skills & training
  Mentoring
- ✓ Parent & commuity involvement
- ✓ Sports & recreation

Overview

Beacons are community centers located in public school buildings that offer a range of activities and services for participants of all ages. The centers are open before and after school, in the evenings and on the weekends. Individual Beacons are managed by community-based organizations that work collaboratively with their host schools, community advisory councils, and a wide range of neighborhood organizations and institutions.

The Beacon initiative started in 1991 with funds from the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development. The Youth Development Institute of the Fund for the City of New York provides ongoing support and technical assistance to the Beacons, including funding and staff training opportunities, linkages to resources, and grants to develop specific projects. There are 80 Beacons, with at least one operating in each of the 32 local school districts in New York City and several in the city's poorest neighborhoods. The individual Beacon programs offer children, youth, and adults a wide range of recreational programs, social services, educational enrichment and vocational activities in several areas: youth development programming, academic support and enhancement, parental involvement, family support, and neighborhood safety and community building.

Population

In FY 1998, more than 77,000 youth (21 years of age and below) and 36,000 adults participated in the 40 Beacons. In fall 1999, a total of 231 youth completed the youth survey. Youth surveyed were between the ages of 12-19. Fifty-three percent of the youth surveyed were females and 47% were males. Most students were African American (46%) and Latino (44%) and fewer than 10% were white, American Indian or of mixed heritage.

Key Findings

Evaluators examined both general and youth-development quality. The former included safety, well-organized activities, consistent enforcement of the rules, and low staff-youth ratio. The latter included the five elements of good youth development programming that is central to the Youth Development Institute's framework: (1) develop caring and trusting relationships, (2) participate in stimulating and engaging activities, (3) benefit from a community of adult support, (4) be challenged to grow by high expectations, and (5) connect with and contribute to their communities. Surveys of Beacon students showed that youth who participated at sites with "higher youth development quality" compared to Beacon sites that had "lower youth development quality" were significantly less likely to report that they had:

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- cut classes,
- hit others to hurt them,
- deliberately damaged other people's property,
- stolen money or other property, and/or
- been in a fight.

Program Components

Beacons differ in the services they offer. However, most offer some of the following:

- recreation activities,
- adult education (GED prepatory, basic literacy and English as a Second Language classes),
- free after-school child-care,
- leadership development,
- parent support groups and counseling,
- substance abuse and pregnancy prevention activities,
- social services (referral to health and mental health services, drug counseling),
- educational enrichment (homework help, reading groups, writing projects),
- intergenerational activities (holiday celebrations, parent-child computer classes),
- community services (voter registration drives, community clean-ups, cultural events), and
- immigrant support services (workshops on naturalization and related legal issues).

Contributing Factors

A Safe and Engaging Place

Youth feel safe and engaged at the Beacons. Among the activities that attract youth are basketball, karate, computer instruction, conflict-resolution training, newspaper production and leadership development.

Experienced Staff

More than three-quarters of Beacons staff have at least three years' experience in the field of youth development, and almost half worked for Beacons for more than three years. This low staff turnover enables youth who use Beacons to build stable and caring relationships with staff.

Staff Development

The Youth Development Institute (YDI) offers a wide range of professional development opportunities for both Beacon directors and staff. These opportunities include monthly meetings of directors to help them incorporate a youth development perspective into organizational behavior and access to training in the principles and practices of positive youth development. Attendance of professional development trainings and meetings is optional for both staff and directors. The sites with staff attending the most training opportunities, however, had the highest-rated youth development quality and the most positive results.

High Expectations

In the majority of activities observed by the evaluators, staff challenged youth to ask questions and examine their thinking. Seventy-four percent of Beacon youth reported that staff have high expectations of their conduct and performance.

Youth as Resources

In about three-quarters of the Beacons, youth are involved in organizing and implementing activities and events. Nearly 90% of the Beacons have a youth council, 86% involve youth as volunteers and 76% engage youth as paid administrative and program staff. Sixty percent of all Beacon programs place youth in community service at least once a month.

Family/Community Involvement

Critical to the original vision of the Beacons is to create a safe place for parents and children to partake in an array of services and activities to strengthen both family and community life. Some of these activities include family and community holiday celebrations, events honoring cultural traditions, parent-support groups, and family counseling services.

Study Methodology
Evaluators used and analyzed focus groups, interviews, and surveys[1] of Beacon youth, staff, administrators, and parents. Site visits were also used. A scale was developed to rate the quality of youth development at each Beacon site.

Evaluation Funding
Annie E. Casey, Ford Foundation and the Open Society Institute.

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[1]A survey was developed specifically for Beacon programs to examine youth educational attitudes such as, perceived importance of doing well in school and anti-social behavior (i.e., delinquency) and civic activities and attitudes (i.e., participation in volunteer work).

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BELL After-School Instructional Curriculum

A Summary of:

"BASICs Afterschool Program 2001-2002 Academic Year" (2001), by Tiffany M. Cooper

Program Activity

- ✓ Academic assistance
- ✓ Cultural enrichment
- Drug & alcohol prevention
- ✓ Life skills & training
- ✓ Mentoring
- ✓ Parent & community involvement
- Sports & recreation

Overview

In 1992, two members of the Harvard Black Law Student Association founded the Building Educated Leaders for Life (BELL), a community-based, non-profit organization. The founders were concerned with the lack of quality youth programming for black and Latino children living in low-income communities. Building on this concern, they developed two out-of-school time programs, known as the BELL After-School Instructional Curriculum (BASICs) and the BELL Accelerated Learning Summer Program (BALSP). Both programs combine BELL's efforts to provide year round educational and social opportunities to elementary school children, particularly those from low-income, under-resourced neighborhoods. This evaluation summary will only describe the BASICs after-school program. The BASICs program meets for three hours after every school day, for 30 weeks, offering students concentrated small group tutoring and mentoring. The BELL organization believes in the ideal of a fair and equitable society, and believes that its efforts in providing additional educational opportunities for children will help transform their credence into a reality. The after-school program operates in three locations: Boston, New York City, and Washington, DC.

Population

The BASICs program served 850 children, during the 2001-2002 school year. Programs operated in 10 elementary school sites in Boston, two sites in New York City and, two sites in Washington, DC. There were 208 students that participated in the evaluation. An overwhelming number of these children entered the program with reading (83%) and math scores (82%) below grade level.

Key Findings

Academic Achievement

Pre- and post-student data were used to determine students reading and math achievement, academic self-concept, and school engagement. Portions of the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test-IV (SDRT-IV) and the Stanford Diagnostic Math Test-IV (SDMT-IV) were used to determine students' strengths and weakness in both areas. Results from SDRT and SDMT pre- and post-tests are presented in the form of scaled scores, norm curve equivalents, and grade equivalent scores:

- There were significant differences in reading (from 581.61 to 596.39; $p<.001$) and math (from 561.28 to 583.79; $p<.001$) scaled scores for students. The range of possible scores in reading and math was 200 to 800.
- NCE math means (from 35.32 to 38.16; $p<.05$)

showed significant differences on students' pre- and post-scores. Although there were no significant differences found for NCE reading means (from 38.49 to 38.82; $p<.001$), students' scores did show positive reading gains. The range of possible NCE scores was 1 to 99; NCE scores were supposed to approximate percentiles.

- Seventy-eight percent (n=207) of scholars made grade-equivalent gains in reading and 79% made grade equivalent gains in math (n=208). The average gains for reading and math were 5 months and 7 months respectively. On average, students began BASICs 5 months behind grade-level in reading and 3 months behind in math. By the end of the 30-week program, scholars were 1 month above grade-level in reading and 3 months above grade-level in math.

Academic Self-Concept

To assess improvements in students' math and reading self-concept and school engagement, the Perception of Ability Scale for Students (PASS) was employed. Mean pre- and post-test scores indicate that there were significant differences found for students' self-perception of their math ability (from 9.41 to 10.30; $p<.001$). Although students improved in their perception of their reading ability (from 9.48 to 9.79), this difference was not statistically significant. There was no difference between students' pre- and post-test scores for student engagement, in fact, there was a decrease in student engagement (from 8.25 to 8.14).

Program Components

The BASICs program is designed to target students of color living in low-income neighborhoods, who are performing below grade level in school. Students are recommended to the program by their teachers, principals, and parents for help to improve their academic and social skills. The program has three major goals: (1) improve students' academic performance in reading and math (2) improve the academic self-concept of students and (3) enhance the social and community skills of students. The following are key components of the BASICs program:

- Voices of Love and Freedom (VLF), a non-profit organization that provides literacy, character education, and drug and violence prevention to students. The BASICs program literacy component has been fully aligned with several national and state language arts learning standards, as well as several national standardized assessments.
- The BASICs program uses Houghton Mifflin's Math Steps curriculum. Math Steps is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum which provides a step-by-step approach to developing students' skills and sub-skills, so that all students can be successful.
- Students are given 45 to 60 minutes each day to work on homework assignments.
- An Educational Advisor (EA) is employed at each site to develop goals for each student by using an assessment from a child's previous school-year teacher, report cards, individual education plans (if applicable), and parent notes. Tutors are coached by EA's, who offer them quality and effective insight and make sure students' goals are met.
- A Site Manager, who may be full-time or part-time, depending on the enrollment goals for each program, manages his or her individual BASICs site. BELL also employs a Program Manager, to oversee every program operating in each city.
- Cultural activities were provided for children to learn about their heritage.

Contributing Factors

Staff Quality

The staff is recruited from the community, where the school is located. Staff members are high school seniors, college and graduate students, teachers and paraprofessional teachers, and other adult community members. All staff members receive 16 hours of

initial training to help them meet the program's objectives. Twenty-four hours of additional training throughout the duration of the program is also offered. Training includes use of BELL curricula, instructional practices, and mentoring. Tutors are separately recruited from staff and are used exclusively for tutoring. They may or may not be paid for tutoring. Like staff, tutors are recruited from a pool of high school seniors, college and graduate students, teachers and paraprofessional teachers, and other adult community members. Tutors receive coaching from the Educational Advisors.

Caring Adults
Staff commit to a one-academic-year relationship with students, and work from 3 to 5 days a week.

National Standard Curriculum
High quality curriculum that is aligned to state and national learning standards

Small Learning Sessions
Small teacher to student ratio (i.e., one adult for no more than five to seven children)

Study Methodology
The study collected pre- and post-data on 208 program students and compared to this data to a national norm group on SDRT-IV and SDMT-IV. The test was administered to first through fifth graders. The general approach was to collect pre and post measures of reading and math, using standardized assessment tools, so that results were compared to a national norm group. Evaluators collected data from all participants who enrolled during the program's first and final weeks.

Evaluation Funding
The financial support that the BELL organization receives is from various funders such as the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation and the New Profit Inc. The funding that BELL receives provides monies for the evaluation of the BASICs program.

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Big Brothers Big Sisters

A Summary of:

"MAKING A DIFFERENCE: An Impact Study of Big Brothers Big Sisters" (1995), by Joseph P. Tierney, Jean Baldwin Grossman, with Nancy L. Resch

Program Activity

- Academic assistance
- Cultural enrichment
- Drug & alcohol prevention
- Life skills & training
- ✓ Mentoring
- Parent & community involvement
- Sports & recreation

Overview

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBS) is a nationwide 93-year-old program whose autonomously funded local affiliates support one-to-one mentoring matches between volunteer adults and young people.

At the time of the study, BBBS maintained 75,000 active matches between adult volunteers and youth as young as five and as old as 18.

Population

In the sample group of 959 10-to-16-year-olds who applied to BBBS programs in 1992 and 1993: over 60% were boys; over 55% were members of a minority group (71% of whom were African American); 95.6% lived with only one parent or grandparent; over 40% were receiving food stamps and/or cash public assistance; almost 55% had experienced the divorce, separation or death of a parent or guardian; more than 25% had experienced physical, emotional or sexual abuse.

Key Findings

Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) conducted baseline interviews of applicants to the eight BBBS agencies in the study and then randomly assigned the youth to treatment and control groups. After 18 months, all sample members were reinterviewed. Interviews showed that, compared to the control group, youth participating in BBBS were estimated to be:

- 46% less likely to initiate drug use (minority Little Brothers and minority Little Sisters were 70% less likely to initiate drug use)
- 27% less likely to initiate alcohol use (minority Little Sisters were 54% less likely to initiate alcohol use)
- 32% less likely to hit someone

Participants also reported that they:

- felt more competent about doing their schoolwork (especially minority Little Sisters and white Little Brothers)
- skipped 52% fewer days of school (Little Sisters skipped 84% fewer days)
- skipped 37% fewer classes
- improved 3% in grade point averages, a surprise finding for a non-academic intervention program (Little Sisters' GPAs improved almost 6% and minority Little Sisters' improved 8%)
- improved the quality of relationships with their

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parents, primarily due to increased trust (especially between white Little Brothers and their parents)

- lied to their parents 37% less
- improved the quality of relationships with their peers

Little effect, positive or negative, was shown on "self-concept" or on the number of: incidents of stolen or damaged property; times youth did "risky" things, fought, cheated on a test, used tobacco, were sent to the principal's office or visited a college or library; hours per week spent reading and doing homework; books read or social and cultural activities attended.

While it is difficult to separate the annual cost of the "matched" relationship from other services of the BBBS agency, the average cost per "matched" youth across 500 agencies is less than $1,000 per year.

Program Components

The following features aid the development and maintenance of BBBS quality matches:

- stringent guidelines for screening volunteers by professional program staff to eliminate applicants who pose a safety risk, are unlikely to keep their time commitment, or are unlikely to form positive relationships with a young person
- an orientation for volunteers to explain program requirements and rules, with some sites providing more extensive training on sexual abuse, developmental stages of youth, communication and limit-setting skills, tips on relationship-building and other issues
- a matching process which takes into account adult volunteer, youth and parental preferences; geographical proximity of adult volunteer and youth; gender; race and religion—most matches are made within gender and staff try to make same-race matches
- supervision to support effective matches, including required monthly telephone contact by agency case managers with the adult volunteer and the youth and/or parents

"Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, [is] the oldest, best-known, and, arguably, the most sophisticated mentoring program in the United States."
–Public/Private Ventures

The effectiveness of the matches is likely due to a substantial time commitment by both the volunteer and youth—both agree to meet two to four times per month for at least a year, with a typical meeting lasting four hours.

Contributing Factors

Caring Relationships

P/PV: "Our research presents clear and encouraging evidence that caring relationships between adults and youth can be created and supported by programs, and can yield a wide range of tangible benefits" to both participants and the larger society.

Effective Standards and Support Systems

P/PV: "These findings... do not mean that the benefits of mentoring occur automatically. The research ... describes the effects of mentoring in experienced, specialized local programs that adhere to well-developed quality standards. In our judgment, the standards and supports [BBBS] programs employ are critical in making the relationships work, and thus in generating the strong impacts we have reported. If such standards and supports can be duplicated, the expansion and replication of mentoring initiatives for

"Participation in a [BBBS] program reduced illegal drug activity and alcohol use, began to improve academic performance, behavior and attitudes, and improved peer and family relationships. Yet the [BBBS] approach does not target those aspects of life, nor directly address them. It simply provides a caring, adult friend."
–Public/Private Ventures

early adolescents would appear to be a strong and sensible investment, from which at least several million youth could benefit." In contrast to BBBS, relatively unstructured mentoring programs were not as effective.

A Developmental Approach

P/PV: "The findings in this report speak to the effectiveness of an approach to youth policy that is very different from the problem-oriented approach that is prevalent in youth programming. This more developmental approach does not target specific problems, but rather interacts flexibly with youth in a supportive manner."

Case Managers

Each match is monitored by BBBS agency case managers through required, frequent and direct contact with volunteers, participants and their parents. Case managers provide guidance and support for problems that might arise.

Study Methodology

P/PV conducted a random assignment study of 959 10-to-16-year-olds who applied to BBBS programs in 1992 and 1993. Baseline interviews of each applicant were followed by random assignment of one-half to the treatment and one-half to the control group. 22% of treatment group members were never matched. All sample members were re-interviewed after 18 months.

Evaluation Funding

Lilly Endowment, The Commonwealth Fund, Pew Charitable Trusts.

Geographic Areas

P/PV chose eight of 500 local accredited BBBS agencies for this study. Criteria were a large caseload and geographic diversity. The sites were Philadelphia, PA; Rochester, NY; Minneapolis, MN; Columbus, OH; Wichita, KA; Houston and San Antonio, TX; and Phoenix, AZ.

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Boys & Girls Clubs of America

A Summary of:

"Enhancing the Educational Achievement of At-Risk Youth" (2000), *Prevention Science*, 1:51-60. By Steven P. Schinke, Kristin C. Cole and Stephen R. Poulin, Columbia University School of Social Work

Program Activity

- ✓ Academic assistance
- ✓ Cultural enrichment
- ✓ Drug & alcohol prevention
- Life skills & training
- Mentoring
- ✓ Parent & community involvement
- ✓ Sports & recreation

Overview

Boys & Girls Clubs of America (B&GCA) was founded in 1906 and has more than 2,000 facilities in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands and U.S. military installations abroad. Nearly 400 of these programs are in public housing areas. The B&GCA's mission is to form healthy partnerships between school-aged children of all backgrounds and concerned adults. The public housing initiative was launched in 1987 under the auspices of the Office of Substance Abuse Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In 1996, B&GCA piloted an after-school educational enhancement program for youth in public housing in five cities. This evaluation examines the results of the pilot study.

Population

Currently B&GCA serves approximately three million children, mostly in economically disadvantaged areas. The evaluation studied 992 youth, with an average age of 12.3 years. 40% were female. Of the participants, 63.5% were African American, 27.5% were Latino, 12% were White and 7.8% other. The sample reflected the national population of youth who live in publicly subsidized housing at the time of the evaluation.

Key Findings

In each of the five cities, researchers targeted three subgroups of youth to participate in the study: (1) youth attending the B&GCA enhancement program ("program"); (2) youth from public housing projects whose B&GCA did not offer the program ("comparison"); and (3) youth from public housing projects that did not have B&GCA (called "control" by researchers). Between the pre-test and the 18 month follow-up, program youth had improved (differences in means were statistically significant at the 5% level):

- Average grade (average grade for program youth rose from 78.39 to 83.48, for comparison youth it fell from 78.47 to 76.42, and for control youth it fell from 75.43 to 71.79).
- Attendance rates (the mean number of missed days in a school year by program youth fell from 6.4 to 3.7, for comparison youth it rose from 4.85 to 5.85, and for control youth it rose from 7.47 to 7.75)
- Grades in most subject areas (grades were rounded to the closest unit to facilitate reading):
  - Mathematics – average grade for program youth rose 4 points (from 77 to 82), while falling 3 points for comparison youth (from 78 to 75) and control youth (from 75 to 72).
  - English – average grade for program youth rose 6 points (from 78 to 84), while falling 1 point for comparison youth (from 79 to 78) and 3 points for control youth (76 to 73).

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- Writing – average grade for program youth rose 5 points (from 80 to 85), while falling 1 point for comparison youth (from 79 to 78) and control youth (from 73 to 72).
- Science – average grade for program youth rose 6 points (from 78 to 84), while falling 2 points for comparison youth (from 79 to 77) and 4 points for control youth (from75 to 71).
- Social Studies – average grade for program youth rose 5 points (from 79 to 84), while falling 2 points for comparison youth (from 78 to 76) and 4 points for control youth (from 77 to 73).

Program Components

Each week, within the B&GCA facility or in outside sessions, the trainers engaged youth in structured activities, such as:

- Four to five hours a week of discussions with knowledgeable adults.
- One to two hours a week of writing.
- Four to five hours a week of leisure reading.
- Five to six hours a week of required homework.
- Two to three hours a week of community services (tutoring other children, for instance).
- Four to five hours a week of educational games, such as word and math games.

Participation is voluntary and, to entice the youth to participate, program sites used many incentives, such as field trips, school supplies, computer time, special privileges, certificates, gold stars and praise.

Parents are also encouraged to participate with their children in the educational activities. Parents and youth attended an orientation meeting, after which parents were invited to serve as volunteers and to attend the cultural events presented by the youth.

Staff, volunteers and parents attend ongoing training.

Contributing Factors

Structured Program

Some comparison and control sites also offered tutoring and homework help, but did not have the structure offered by the B&GCA program, did not require homework and tutoring, and did not engage routinely in educational games to enhance the lessons being taught.

Trained Staff

Another difference between B&GCA programs and the comparison and control sites was the presence of a trained staff solely focused on educational enhancements.

Study Methodology

This study used both a comparison and a "control" group. Because the researchers used a nested design, participation in the groups was voluntary (not random). Youth were not provided with incentives to participate in the study. Comparison and control groups mirrored the age, gender and ethnic/racial background of program youth. Some of the youth in the comparison and control groups received tutoring, but did not attend a structured after-school program. The attrition rate at the end of the study was 13.91%, with no significant differences between subgroups. Researchers used students' surveys, teacher ratings and school records to collect data at the beginning of the program (pre-test), six months later (post-test) and 18 months later (follow-up). Findings were consistent across all measures (this summary presents only school data) and differences were statistically significant at the 5% level.

Evaluation Funding

Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Geographic Areas

Public housing projects in Cleveland, OH; Edinburgh, TX; New York City, NY; Oakland, CA; and Tampa, FL.

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Cap City Kids Program

A Summary of:

"An Evaluation Report for the Cap City Kids Program: Phase II" (2002) by Dawn Anderson-Butcher

Program Activity

- ✓ Academic assistance
- ✓ Cultural enrichment
- ✓ Drug & alcohol prevention
- Life skills & training
- Mentoring
- ✓ Parent & community involvement
- ✓ Sports & recreation

Overview

The Cap City Kids (CCK) after-school program was initiated by the Mayor's office in Columbus, Ohio to improve youth educational outcomes and access to positive youth development programs. In an effort to not develop after-school programming that would be isolated from the community-at-large, the City's Office of Education coordinated a city-wide forum that received the input of more than 180 individuals, representing teachers, public school administrators, neighborhood representatives, members of the Columbus Board of Education, child-care providers, child advocates, and other community leaders. What emerged from this meeting was a city-wide vision for after-school programs focused on providing safe places for children, improved academic achievement and social development.

During the months of January to June, 2000, the Mayor's Office of Education piloted the program in four community recreation centers located in disadvantaged neighborhoods.[1] CCK operates everyday after school from 3:00pm – 6:00pm and each site enrolls approximately 45 elementary school children who live in the neighborhood, immediately surrounding the centers. Enrollment was based on a first-come-first serve basis and there was no charge for the program.

Population

There were 181 youth registered for the CCK program. Fifty-five percent of these youth were female and 45% were male; 87% of youth were African American, 12% white and 1% Latino. The average income of all CCK participants' families was a little over $17,000 and 76% of the children live in female-headed households.

Key Findings

During this pilot phase of program implementation, the only outcome that showed significant differences between program students and non-program students was school attendance during the third quarter of the school year. Although there were no significant differences between both groups of students on teacher reported grades in reading, math, and homework completion, trend analysis indicated that CCK students were increasing their grades in the three areas at a higher rate than the non-program students. Related findings include:

[1]Please note the current evaluation report from the second year (2001-2002) of the CAP City program is now available and the program evaluator may be contacted for additional information regarding this report.

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School attendance
Youth who participated in CCK had significantly lower school absenteeism during the first quarter of CCK operations than the matched comparison group.

Math achievement
The youth attending CCK had higher math grades both before and during their CCK program participation than the children in the matched comparison group. Both groups increased their math grades throughout the school year; however, there were no significant differences between the two groups. Trends indicate that children attending CCK increased these grades at a higher rate than those not attending.

Reading achievement
There were no significant differences in reading grades and proficiency scores when comparisons were made between CCK participants and the comparison groups prior to and during CCK operations.

Homework completion
CCK students had higher homework completion grades (i.e., a specific category listed on student's reports cards where teachers rate students' performance on out-of-class assignments) both before and during their CCK program participation than the children in the matched comparison group. Both groups increased their homework grades throughout the school year; however, there were no significant differences between the two groups. Trends indicated, however, that children attending CCK increased these grades at a higher rate than those not attending.

Program Components

The following are program components that are used to accomplish the mission of the CCK program:

- Academic assistance (i.e., homework help, computer math)
- Enrichment activities (i.e., field trips, drama, art projects)
- Prevention units (i.e., anger management, alcohol and drug prevention)
- Recreational activities
- Family involvement (i.e., parent-staff conferences, parenting classes)
- Nutritious snacks

Contributing Factors

Staff Quality
Site visits to the CCK programs revealed that staff are motivated by their work in the after-school program and feel supported by the CCK administrator. Staff have formed relationships with teachers and were building connections with counselors and principals.

Family strengths and outreach
Many parents used the CCK program as affordable childcare. Parents also served as volunteers and worked at CCK sites. CCK programs outreach to parents through providing referrals for other social services to parents and families, parent action meetings, sending children home with food for their families, and having parents help plan summer program activities.

Study Methodology

Youth attending CCK (n=121) and their matched-counterparts (n=119) were compared on various academic indicators, including attendance at school, proficiency scores, and teacher reported reading, math, and homework completion grades, four times throughout the school year. Since CCK was only in operation during the third and fourth grade periods, comparisons could be made from before to during CCK program operations. The comparison group was pulled from the Columbus Public School District's information systems database.

Evaluation Funding

Office of Education for the City of Columbus, Ohio.

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Juvenile Mentoring Program

A Summary of:

Interim Findings, National Evaluation of the Juvenile Mentoring Program
Information Technology International

Program Activity

- ✓ Academic assistance
- Cultural enrichment
- Drug & alcohol prevention
- Life skills & training
- ✓ Mentoring
- Parent & community involvement
- Sports & recreation

Overview

The Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP) was implemented in 1995, by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to serve youth at-risk for delinquency, gang involvement, educational failure and dropping out-of-school. OJJDP has competitively awarded funds of up to $180,000 - $210,000, on a three-year basis, to over 250 community-based agencies to begin or continue one-to-one mentoring relationships between adult volunteers and at-risk youth. One-to-one mentoring relationships involved mentors interacting with youth an average of once a week, for one hour. To date, there are over 260 agencies in 48 states/U.S. territories that have received JUMP support. Agencies receiving JUMP support must be public or private non-profit organizations that are local educational agencies (LEAs) or agencies that have developed partnerships with LEAs.

Population

All JUMP projects must serve at-risk youth. There are approximately 17,134 youth between the ages of 6 and 18 that participate in the JUMP program. JUMP projects serve almost an equal amount of males (48%) and females (51%). Over half of JUMP participants are African Americans (51%). Whites (21%) and Latinos (19%) account for 40% of JUMP students. Native Americans (7%), other (1%), and Asian/Pacific Islander (1%) have the smallest number of participants in this program. The JUMP evaluation gathered data from all youth participating in JUMP Projects. Findings in this report are based on a sample of 451 students between the ages of 12 and 14 who completed standardized risk screening instruments during their participation in JUMP.

Key Findings

Although the JUMP evaluation includes both a process (i.e., site visits and telephone interviews) and outcome evaluation (i.e., youth survey), this evaluation summary only includes results from the outcome evaluation. The outcome evaluation compared JUMP youth whose mentoring relationships had ended with JUMP youth who had just begun participation in the project (i.e., generally at the beginning of the school year). Both groups of students' responses were compared on the Problem Oriented Screening Instrument for Teenagers (POSIT). The POSIT measures 10 psychosocial and behavioral domains: 1) substance use/abuse, 2) physical health, 3) mental health, 4) family relationships,

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5) peer relationships, 6) educational status, 7) vocational status, 8) social skills, 9) leisure/recreation, and 10) aggressive behavior/delinquency. Because youth taking the survey were between the ages of 12 and 15, the evaluators did not report information on their vocational status.

- The results showed that post-mentoring youth were significantly different than youth just entering the JUMP program in the following areas:
- Higher positive relationships with peers i.e., having friends at all, age-appropriate peers, and less arguing with friends (mean scores were 3.3 vs. 2.7) ;
- Lower aggressive behavior and delinquency, i.e., less fighting, gang activity, and use of weapons (mean scores were 4.3 vs. 5.0); and
- Lower feelings of depression and isolation (mean scores were 4.7 vs. 5.3).

Educational status means (i.e., screens primarily for disabilities or underachievement due to problems with cognitive functioning like concentration, learning new tasks, and following directions) were actually lower for youth who had long-term mentors (3.8) than for youth who did not (3.7). Although these mean differences were not statistically significant, researchers suggest that perhaps the amount of time between test administrations was not long enough to show impact on educational achievement. Further, having mentors only interact with youth one hour, once every week may be too low to impact educational status as measured by the POSIT.

Program Components

JUMP mentors impact family and peer relationships, mental and physical health, and help youth deter their involvement in delinquent activities. Some JUMP agencies have structured curricula that youth and adult volunteer pairs follow, while other agencies allow mentor/mentee pairs to participate in activities of their own choosing.

Contributing Factors

Caring Adults

The foundation of the JUMP program is centered on adult volunteers providing consistent and caring relationships to young people that serve as lasting influences in deterring their participation in delinquent and anti-social activities. All adult volunteers receive thorough police background checks. Nearly all volunteers receive training and some receive ongoing support. Because each of the JUMP projects are free to structure their project in the way that they feel is appropriate, the type of training and ongoing support varies widely from one project to the next.

Project Leaders

Outside of providing mentors and support to youth, a key component for the success of the JUMP program is the selection and retention of strong project leaders. The strength of project leaders relies on their working with youth, volunteers, LEA members, and establishing relationships in the community, while simultaneously raising the program's presence in the community. Some JUMP projects lack of a strong project leader has led to their inability to recruit youth and volunteers or to acquire additional program resources.

Collaborative Relationships

JUMP's infrastructure is maintained through an array of partnerships with LEA's, community-based organizations, schools, and project leaders. The most important factor in these relationships is that each partner's roles and responsibilities are clearly outlined. The clear demarcating of roles helps each group differentiate responsibilities for youth and volunteer recruitment, in-kind donations of space, equipment or facilities use, and access to information such as school data.

Program Sustainability

Since JUMP programs receive non-renewable funding for only three years, it becomes critical to programs to obtain additional funding. Some programs have failed to identify funding before the three-year time period is complete. Failure to identify funding has led to a disruption of program services and has forced project staff to leave programs early for more permanent employment.

Study Methodology

This study used a lagged-stage design, whereby data from youth completing their mentoring matches are compared to youth just entering the mentoring project. Youth just entering the program complete the POSIT survey. A follow-up version of the POSIT is administered at the termination of the mentoring relationship. Originally, 651 youth from 26 JUMP projects completed this component of the national evaluation. However, because incomplete data were available for some of these youth, only 451 POSIT/Follow Up POSIT pairs were included in this analysis.

Evaluation Funding[1]

Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention.

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[1]Evaluators collected data on academic indicators including school grades, attendance and school based discipline. However, because grantees provided insufficient data on these measures, evaluators relied on the POSIT scores as an educational indicator.

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LA's BEST

A Summary of:

"A Decade of Results: The Impact of LA's BEST After School Enrichment Program on Subsequent Student Achievement and Performance" (2000), by Denise Huang, Barry Gribbons, Kyung Sung Kim, Charlotte Lee, and Eva L. Baker

Program Activity

- ✓ Academic assistance
- ✓ Cultural enrichment
- Drug & alcohol prevention
- ✓ Life skills & training
- ✓ Mentoring
- ✓ Parent & community involvement
- ✓ Sports & recreation

Overview

LA's BEST (Better Educated Students for Tomorrow) is an after-school program for students in grades K-5 in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). Founded in 1988, LA's BEST provides a safe environment, educational enrichment programs, and recreational activities primarily to minority students and youth from low-income families. Like many after school programs, LA's BEST runs from the end of the regular school day at 3:00 pm until 6:00 pm Monday through Friday and there is no cost to students' parents. Unlike other such programs, however, LA's BEST students must register (rather than simply walk-in) to participate in the program. Daily enrichment activities include homework assistance, computer activities, drama, sports, visual arts, reading and field trips.

Population

LA's BEST serves over 18,000 students in 104 elementary schools throughout the Los Angeles metropolitan area. Most of the students who attend LA's BEST are minorities from low-income families. The evaluators followed 4,312 LA's BEST participants from school year 1993-94 through 1997-98. All of the students in the study were in grades 2-5; 51% were girls; 80% were eligible for free or reduced price lunch and 60% were designated as having limited English proficiency (LEP). The racial/ethnic demographics of the students in the study were: 74% Latino, 20% African American, 3.5% Asian, and 2.5% white. The comparison group of 15,010 students in LA public schools who did not participate in LA's BEST had higher percentages of Latinos (79%), Asians (6%), and LEP students (67%), and lower percentages of students eligible for free or reduced price lunch (71%).

Key Findings

Evaluators measured the impact of LA's BEST in this study by tracking participant and non-participant scores in the areas of reading, mathematics, and language acquisition. Students took the Comprehensive Test for Basic Skills (CTBS) and the SAT-9. The following charts show how a cohort of LA's BEST students began the 3rd grade scoring below peers in the comparison group, but completed the 8th grade scoring higher than their peers. For instance, 3rd graders began LA's BEST scoring significantly lower on math than their peers, with an average score of 529 versus an average score of 562 for the compari-

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son group. By the eighth grade this difference no longer exists, LA's BEST students had an average score of 1,051 on reading versus 1,043 for the comparison group. (See below tables for more results.)

According to the evaluators, one reason for the academic achievement for LA's BEST participants was increased school attendance. To compare the attendance rate of the 1994/95 cohort of LA's BEST students with their peers' attendance rate in middle school, the evaluators charted these two groups of students' average annual attendance rates in 1998/99. It was found that LA's BEST students attended school three more days per year than the comparison group. This finding was significant.

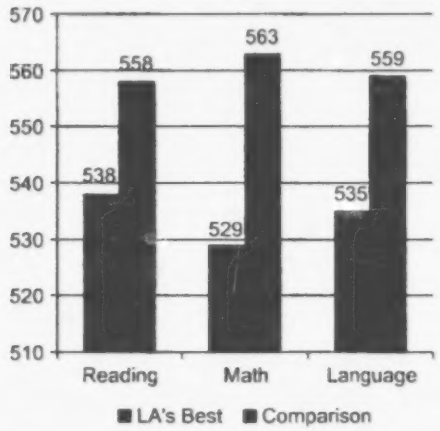
LA's BEST also helped Latino students became more proficient in English than their peers who did not attend the after-school program. Evaluators documented this finding by charting the proportion of students redesignated as "fully proficient" in English among LA's BEST participants and non-participants.

There were some statistical differences between program and non-program students:

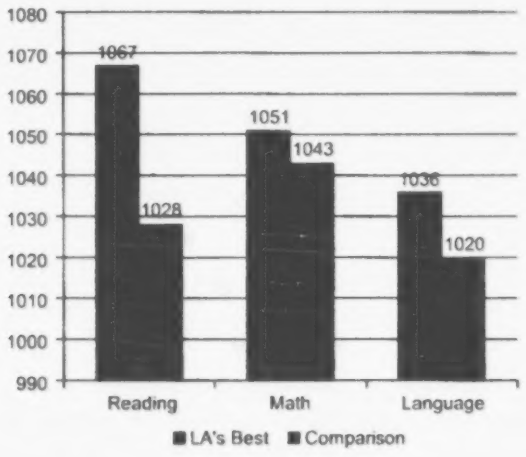
- In sixth grade, 10% of LEP students in LA's BEST versus 6% of LEP non-participants were redesignated as fully proficient in English.
- In eighth grade, 19% of LA's BEST LEP alumni were redesignated as proficient English speakers versus 12% of LEP students who had not attended LA's BEST.

LA's BEST Achievement Results[1]

Pre-Test Scores: 3rd Grade in 1994/95



Post-Test Scores: 8th Grade 1998/99



Program Components

There are LA's BEST programs in 69 schools in low-income, Los Angeles neighborhoods. Though they vary in size and scope, they share several key components:

- The programs are held in elementary schools from the end of the regular school day at 3:00 pm until 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday.
- Adults from the school and the surrounding community staff LA's BEST sites.
- Parents must enroll their children in LA's BEST rather than simply dropping-in sporadically.
- Student activities include reading, organized sports, art, drama, dance, computer work, homework assistance and field trips.
- Parents are welcome on the field trips and as program volunteers.

[1]These charts and tables are based on graphs from the LA's BEST evaluation. The evaluation does not include data sheets, and thus these figures are estimates of the program impact.

Contributing Factors

Extended Learning/Safe Environment

Parents and students value LA's BEST because it offers a safe place for kids to learn and play after school until caregivers come home from work. In 1993, one quarter of the parents and three quarters of the students acknowledged that without LA's BEST, the youth would have had no reliable adult supervision after school.

Parent/Student Commitment

Evaluators highlighted students' and parents' long-term commitment to the LA's BEST after school program. The simple factor of enrolling in the program rather than dropping-in leads to stronger commitment.

Small Learning Communities

With no more than 20 students per staff member, LA's BEST provides small learning communities in which staff members can give personalized instruction and attention to each child. Program staff includes management personnel at the Office of the Mayor, the Central Office of LAUSD, and more than 800 site staff.

City-School Partnerships

LA's BEST began as an initiative from the Mayor's office that aimed at reducing gang-related activities in the city. The partnership between the city government and the schools has continued to be crucial to the success of the program. "The city has to be a player," says Carla Sanger, the CEO and President of the program. "We can't leave it to school districts alone. There are so many resources that a city can make accessible and affordable—theaters, parks, field trips, [etc.]."

School Engagement

Surveys with parents, teachers and students revealed that LA's BEST improves student attitudes towards school. According to teachers, LA's BEST students were more engaged in learning than their peers who did not attend the program.

Program/School Attendance Rates

Evaluators believed that the combination of students regularly participating in the BEST program and steadily attending school contributed to BEST's participants' good school performance.

Study Methodology

Researchers followed LA's Best participants for five years to evaluate whether the program influenced their academic performance. The sample consisted of students from all 24 LA's BEST schools in 1994. Within the LA's BEST schools, students who participated in the program were identified for the cohort years under study and compared to the non-participants in the same schools. Cohorts of interest included students who were in first, second, third, fourth, and fifth grade in 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96, and 1996-97, and students who were in the first, second, third, and fourth grade in 1997-98. Academic performance was measured through scores in the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) in reading, mathematics, and language arts. In 1997, the CTBS test was replaced by the Stanford-9. Other data included absences in middle school, transience, course patterns, and changes in LEP status. Results were compared to students who did not participate in LA's BEST. The two groups had slightly different ethnic and socio-economic composition (see population). Participation in the program was divided into three levels: high—participants were present more than 75% days during the five years; medium—participants were present from 74% to 26% days present; and low—presence 25% of the time or less. Linear regression and path analysis were used to examine the relationship between intensity of participation and academic achievement. Significance level varies from .000 to .005.

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Evaluation and Program Funding
The evaluation was funded by the Bandai Foundation, the UCLA Center for the Study of Evaluation, and the Office of Education Research and Improvement in the U.S. Department of Education. LA's BEST is funded by the Los Angeles Mayor's Office and the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Geographic Areas
Los Angeles, California

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Quantum Opportunities[1]

A Summary of:

"Evaluation of The Quantum Opportunities Program (QOP): Did The Program Work?" (1994), by Andrew Hahn, with Tom Leavitt and Paul Aaron

Program Activity

- ✓ Academic assistance
- ✓ Cultural enrichment
- Drug & alcohol prevention
- ✓ Life skills & training
- Mentoring
- ✓ Parent & community involvement
- Sports & recreation

Overview

The Quantum Opportunities Program (QOP) is a year round, multi-year, comprehensive service program for disadvantaged youth (all from families receiving food stamps and public assistance) launched in five communities in 1989. Twenty-five disadvantaged students in each community were randomly selected to enter the program beginning in ninth grade and continuing through four years of high school.

QOP is operated by community-based organizations in the five communities served (Opportunities Industrial Centers in four sites; Learning Enterprise in Milwaukee). QOP is a long-term, comprehensive program that focuses on three activities to improve youth outcomes: (1) 250 hours of educational activities (tutoring, homework assistance, computer-assisted instruction); (2) 250 hours of development activities (life and family skills, planning for the future including postsecondary education and jobs); and (3) 250 hours of community service activities aimed at improving neighborhood conditions. The QOP program provided each site of 25 youth with a caring adult that served as both role model and advisor to each student for four years. Youth in the program were not only expected to form strong caring bonds with the adult leader but also with their program peers. The QOP program was delivered by community agencies that provided services after school on their premises and, in some cases, in school settings (where the schools provided time and space).

Population

QOP students were selected randomly from families receiving public assistance in each of the five project cities. Eighty-six percent were ethnic minorities and only 9% lived with both parents.

Key Findings

Brandeis researchers evaluated four QOP sites. Relative to a control group, QOP students:

- graduated from high school more often (63 vs. 42%)
- dropped out of school less often (23 vs. 50%)
- went on to postsecondary education more often (42 vs. 16%)
- attended a 4-year college more often (18 vs. 5%)
- attended a 2-year institution more often (19 vs. 9%)
- became teen parents less often (24 vs. 38%)
- were less likely to be arrested (19 vs. 23%)
- more often: took part in a community project in the six months following QOP (21 vs. 12%); were volunteer tutors, counselors or mentors, (28 vs. 8%) and gave time to non-profit, charitable, school or community groups (41 vs. 11%, only statistically significant at the Philadelphia site)

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The effects of QOP increased over time, as measured at the end of each high school year. After the first year, there were no significant differences seen between the QOP and control groups in the 11 academic and functional skill areas measured. After two years, scores of QOP participants were higher in all 11 areas, and the difference was statistically significant in five areas. By the time QOP students and control sample were leaving high school in 1993, QOP student group scores in all 11 areas were much higher than control student scores, and the differences were statistically significant in every area.

There was wide variation among the program sites. One of the five original sites, Milwaukee, was dropped from the evaluation after problems with implementation and follow-up. Of the remaining four, Philadelphia had the most significant outcomes. For example, the rate of four-year college attendance was nearly three times higher than the rate in San Antonio, five times higher than Oklahoma City, and eight times higher than Saginaw. Researchers noted that at the Philadelphia site, staff developed and maintained strong bonds with the QOP students, and were able to forge a cohesive group identity.

The Ford Foundation forward funded QOP at $1.3 million for *four* years. The evaluation's cost/benefit analysis showed that QOP cost $10,600 per participant over the four year period and that $3.68 was gained for every dollar spent if QOP college students earned a degree. Even if only one-third of QOP college students ultimately received degrees, the benefit-cost ratio was $3.04 for every dollar spent.

Program Components

QOP also features financial incentives for participants and staff. Students receive small stipends for participating in program activities (starting at $1 per program hour, and rising to $1.33) and bonuses for completing activities ($100 for every 100 program hours). They also receive a matching amount in an account that could be used only for post-program activities, such as college and training.

"In contrast to most youth programs in the 'add-on' or 'second-chance' tradition, QOP was designed to encourage long-term involvement through an array of services. Meaningful relationships with adults would be encouraged without fear of having bonds abruptly severed when the programs ended."
–Brandeis University

Contributing Factors

Caring Adults

Brandeis: "If young people are connected with caring adults for sustained periods of time, year-round, positive results do emerge." Program administrators and staff, as well as teachers and mentors, took an active interest in the welfare of the QOP students, encouraging them, visiting them, following up and doing everything they could to keep them in the program. "Once in QOP, always in QOP" was the unofficial motto, and most program counselors took it to heart.

"Simply put, when a quantum opportunity was offered, young people from public assistance backgrounds—African American males, females, whites, Asians, others—took it! They joined the programs and many stayed with the programs or the staff associated with the initiatives, for long periods."
–Brandeis University

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Sense of Community

The project sites are small, with only 25 students in each. Students are able to bond with each other and with adults in the program, particularly at the Philadelphia site.

Multiple Services Encompassing All Aspects of Youths' Lives

The QOP program was designed to address the many challenges and obstacles that disadvantaged youth face. QOP focuses on developing basic skills (academic and functional) for future success, strengthening life and social skills to make better choices and operate more effectively with families and peers, broadening horizons through cultural trips and other experiences, and taking pride in the community through active service.

Quality Staff

Results from the most effective project site—Philadelphia–show what can be accomplished with a dedicated, quality staff. Brandeis: "The differences, for example, between San Antonio and Philadelphia cannot be attributed to the neighborhood setting, the characteristics of participants, or to the program model. What distinguishes these sites is the degree of buy-in from the host organizations and the commitment of staff at all levels."

Financial Incentives as Part of a Comprehensive Program

While financial incentives are important to some students, and help with family expenses, it appears that they are not the decisive factor in QOP participation. When they are part of a comprehensive, well-developed program, financial incentives can be effective in maintaining student interest in and attendance at program events. However, they do not appear to operate effectively in the absence of a strong program featuring much personal contact with staff.

Financial Resources

The Ford Foundation funded the QOP program upfront, making it possible to plan for and deliver a host of services over an extended period of time. Both staff and students knew the resources were there to carry through on their commitment.

Study Methodology

In 1989, program designers randomly assigned 50 disadvantaged students in each of the five sites to either a program or a control group. Researchers compared the progress of the two groups with periodic questionnaires and basic skills tests.

Evaluation Funding

Ford Foundation.

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[1] For the evaluation of the replication of QOP, please see: Maxfield, M., Schirm, A., & Rodriguez-Planas, N. (2002). *The Quantum Opportunity Program Demonstration: Implementation and Short-Term Impacts*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor.

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Sacramento START

A Summary of:

"Supporting Student Achievement: Evaluation Report for 2000/2001"
(2001) by Minicucci Associates

Program Activity

- ✓ Academic assistance
- ✓ Cultural enrichment
- Drug & alcohol prevention
- ✓ Life skills & training
- Mentoring
- ✓ Parent & community involvement
- ✓ Sports & recreation

Overview

Sacramento START (Students Today Achieving Results for Tomorrow) is a regional after-school program that is operated by the city of Sacramento in collaboration with the county of Sacramento and five area school districts. The schools served by START programs are located in areas with wide-spread poverty, unemployment, numerous single and teen parents, low education levels, high dropout rates, crime and violence. The primary focus of START programs is to provide academic support to students who are struggling in school.

In 1995, the START program was founded and placed in five school districts and 18 elementary schools. Currently, the START program serves 3,820 elementary school students. The city of Sacramento serves as the fiscal agent for the program, and also employs and trains staff and prepares reports to funders. Elementary school sites provide space for the program and school personnel collaborate on curriculum planning and support the program financially with matching funds.

Population

The evaluation study included 748 students. 54% of the students were females. Of the 748 students, 30% were third graders, 33% fourth graders, 24% fifth graders, and 13% sixth graders. Twenty-nine percent of the students were Latino, 27% African Americans, 23% Asian, 15% white, and the remaining 1% "Other." All participants were residents of the Sacramento metropolitan area.

Key Findings

The evaluator used SAT-9 standardized test scores from the different START schools and districts, reporting the data in Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) scores, based on national test performance. The state of California asks districts to examine growth in learning for students in the bottom 25th percentile or rank[1], therefore, these findings are also reported.

Academic Achievement

Pre/post data on SAT-9 scores from six START school districts showed:

- START students significantly improved 3 NCE points on their math SAT-9 scores;
- START students significantly dropped 1 NCE point on their reading SAT-9 scores[1], there was no change in reading scores for English Language Learners;

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- In math, English Language Learners gained 4 NCE points compared to English speakers who gained 2 NCE points;
- For reading, 37% of START students were in the bottom quartile, 20% of those students moved to a higher quartile; and
- For math, 30% were in the bottom quartile, and 42% of those students moved to a higher quartile.

School Attendance

Students who attended START programs in the previous year improved their school attendance the following year from 5.5 days absent to 5.4 days absent, a reduction of 0.1 days absent.

Students deemed "problem attenders" (i.e., missing more than 10 days of school) in the previous year, improved their attendance the following year, dropping from 14.8 days absent to 10.1 days absent, a reduction of 4.7 days absent

A study of a small sample of 227 returning START students showed improved attendance in the first year they were in START (7.3 days absent), second START year (5 days absent), and third START year (5.1 days absent), a total reduction of 4.7 days absent from school.

Program Components

Academic Support

Classroom teachers were instrumental in providing academic support to START programs and students. Teachers served as literacy coaches who worked closely with START staff to link classroom literacy programs to after-school START activities. Teachers also helped staff establish learning centers, explaining classroom techniques, instructional activities, and providing recommendations to program leaders on cluster activities.

Enrichment Activities

START programs provided enrichment activities that included performing arts, recreation, field trips, and curriculum connected to the local newspaper. All enrichment activities contained a learning component.

Staff Training

START staff are involved in a number of trainings that reflect the program implementation process and principles. Trainings are focused on core topics and cluster training. Core trainings are required for all site directors and program leaders and consist of workshops in classroom/behavior management, enrichment, homework/tutoring, literacy, attendance, and lesson plans. The START training program is a key strategy for aligning after-school program activities with the schools' curriculum. During the summer of 2000, START staff participated in more than 200 hours of training.

Building Community Capacity

One of the primary objectives of the START program is to build the capacity of the community surrounding each site by providing employment and training for neighborhood residents, parents and school instructional aids.

Student/Staff Ratio

The majority of START sites had a student-to-staff ratio no greater than 20:1. START directors are trying to lower this ratio.

Contributing Factors

School/Program Collaboration

Communication and collaboration between START directors and school administrators was crucial to the success of the program. START had to work with schools, especially in aligning the academic training of staff and the learning goals of students in the program.

Extended Learning/Sense of Safety

By providing a safe and fun-learning environment after school, the START program offered an alternative avenue of academic enrichment for minority and low-income students.

Community Involvement
START consciously worked to involve members of the community in its after-school program, hiring nearly three-quarters of its staff from neighborhoods surrounding the elementary schools where the program was held.

Study Methodology
The evaluation team selected a pool of 1200 students in grades three to six who participated in START for 30 days during the months of February and March. Of these students, only 748 met the evaluation criteria of having complete achievement data for 1999/2000 and 2000/2001. The evaluators also included achievement data on 227 START students returning to the program for the second year, findings on 707 students with complete information on school attendance who were enrolled for a full year in the program year and the previous year and the 186 returning START students with complete attendance information for three years. The evaluators collected data through focus groups, surveys, and interviews.

Evaluation Funding
The City of Sacramento funded the evaluation

Geographic Areas
Sacramento, CA

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[1]California state laws requires that schools provide information on a minimum of 25 students for each grade level participating in the program.

See also: Minicucci Associates (November 2002). *Sacramento START Evaluation Report 2001/2002*. Sacramento, CA: Author.

Youth Education for Tomorrow

A Summary of:

"Mustering the Armies of Compassion in Philadelphia" (2002) by Bill Hangley, Jr., & Wendy S. McClanahan

Program Activity

- ✓ Academic assistance
- Cultural enrichment
- Drug & alcohol prevention
- Life skills & training
- Mentoring
- Parent & community involvement
- Sports & recreation

Overview

In 2000, Public Private Ventures (P/PV) was awarded the Community-Serving Ministries grant, by the Pew Charitable Trust, to explore the capacity and potential of faith-based institutions in Philadelphia to provide: (1) literacy, (2) mentoring, and (3) child-care services. Literacy was the first area of focus for P/PV. To examine the capacity of religious institutions to improve the literacy levels of youth, P/PV established the Youth Education for Tomorrow (YET) center model. The YET model was established with the belief that any site of faith, despite size or financial resources, could successfully teach children to read. In this model, sites provided the space, the children, and the volunteers while P/PV provided the funding, pedagogy and training for all involved staff. With the YET model as a framework, sites instructed young people in making the connection between reading, speaking, writing, and the events of the world around them. P/PV cautioned that the YET model was not a clinical program, nor was it intended to diagnose or serve children with severe reading deficiencies. The program was also not designed for those who already read at grade level, although they may have benefited from the program. P/PV required sites to restrict the program to children who read three years or less below grade level. The 21 sites that participated in this program were from a variety of religious affiliations, e.g., Baptist, Catholic, Mennonite, Presbyterian, and Methodist denominations. Sites were located in schools, community-based organizations, and several area churches.

Population

The YET program served 885 youth. Eighty percent of enrolled youth were African American, 7% Latino, and 13% were white. Fifty-seven percent of program youth were males and 43% were females. Sixty percent were in grades 1 to 5, 10% were in grades 6 to 8, and 21% were in high school. More youth were served that were living below or at the poverty level (i.e., 75% reduced free or reduced price school lunch). Students in the YET program averaged grades of B minus to C and 2% of YET students were in special education.

Key Findings

Literacy Skills Improvement

Elementary Students

The average elementary student who attended the YET program was a third grader who read a little better than a first-grader (1.7). After 90 days of attendance in the YET program, students improved their reading ability to read 0.5 grade level below their grade level, for an improvement of 1.2 grade

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levels. This means that the average third grade student who arrived in the YET program reading a little better than a student in the first grade, after 90 days in the program, was reading well into the second grade.

Middle and High School Students

The older children (grades 6 to 12), according to a pre-test using the Informal Reading Inventory, were reading 3.9 below grade level. When tested after 90 days, students were reading 2.2. below grade level, for an improvement of 1.6 grade levels. These students reduced their deficiency by an average of 58%.

Program Components

- The 21 YET sites contain approximately 30 youth. The reading ability of elementary children who came to the program was 1.7 years below grade level. The reading ability of older students who came to the program was 3.8 years below grade level. Although the goal of the YET program was to target students below grade level and bring them up to grade level, sites had moral difficulty excluding young people with proficient reading ability.
- YET center classes are held after school for 90 minutes, four days a week, throughout the school year. During this time period, students and a teacher (ratio) engage in four basic activities: (1) oral language vocabulary activity i.e., talking about words and ideas in the context of current events, holidays, issues in other things of interest to students, (2) teacher reading aloud to students so students hear what good reading sounds like, (3) student reading, and (4) writing.
- Sites are required to post a daily schedule of classroom activities, displays of students' work and a "word wall" where students could view high-frequency words. Sites are also asked to make sure students had library cards and access to books in class.

Contributing Factors

Staff Quality

Teachers are professionally qualified and approved by P/PV.

Student Attendance

The more a student attended the YET program, the greater gains they made in reading improvement. Students who attended 100 days or more at program sites, averaged almost two grade levels (1.9) of reading gains, whereas students who attended less than 100 days reading gains only improved a little over one grade level (1.1). The effect of program attendance on reading improvement remained critical even after such individual characteristics as race, gender, age, and low-income status were considered.

Program Implementation

The more effective sites implemented the YET program model, and reading scores for students improved. P/PV rated YET centers adherence to the program model based on program site visits. Each site was assigned a score from 1 (poor) to 5 (outstanding) in each of four categories (oral language, writing, reading, and overall consistency). YET centers that scored higher on P/PV's rating scale had higher performing students than centers who scored lower on P/PV's rating measure.

Study Methodology
Children were tested for their reading levels at their entry into the program, midway in the program and at the end of their first year in the program. Students were assessed with the Informal Reading Inventory that provided teachers with students reading levels.

Evaluation Funding
The Pew Charitable Trust.

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Appendix I

The evaluations included in *Some Things DO Make a Difference for Youth: A Compendium of Evaluations of Youth Programs and Practices* (1997); *MORE Things That DO Make a Difference for Youth* (1999); *Raising Academic Achievement* (2000); *Raising Minority Academic Achievement* (2001); and *No More Islands: Family Involvement in 27 School and Youth Programs* (2003) were selected through a multiphase process:

A. *Collection of evaluations*: The searches involved (1) reviews of national databases, such as the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), Sociological Abstracts and the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS); (2) Internet searches; (3) direct contact with program coordinators, policymakers, funding officers and researchers; (4) distribution of flyers requesting evaluations during forums, conferences and similar events; and (5) a request for evaluations posted at the AYPF web site (http://www.aypf.org).

B. *Initial selection*: The evaluations collected were then reviewed for (1) program characteristics—programs and practices had to target school-aged children and older youth; (2) research quality—evaluation sample, design and methodology had to follow accepted research standards; and (3) program results/outcomes—the evaluations had to include quantitative data indicating the initiative resulted in positive effects on participants, such as improved academic achievement, increased graduation rates, decreased rate of risky behaviors, and others.

C. *Internal review*: The evaluations that met the criteria above were summarized and reviewed by an internal committee. Summaries approved in this initial review were then sent to evaluators and program staff members to clarify questions, provide more recent data when available, and ensure each summary's accuracy.

D. *External review*: An external reviewer read all the selected summaries from the reports to assess once more the quality of the original research and the summaries.

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